



LIBRARY
OF THE
Theological Seminary,
PRINCETON, N. J.

BV 3790 .P38 1875

Pattison, Samuel Rowles,
1809-1901.

On the history of
evangelical Christianity



100
1/2

ON THE HISTORY OF
EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY.



ON THE HISTORY
OF
EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY.

BY
S. R. PATTISON.

“Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold ; all these gather themselves together, and come to THEE.”—*Isaiah*.

LONDON :
HODDER AND STOUGHTON,
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXXV.



PREFACE.

THE friends of Evangelical Religion have made too little of the circumstance that the doctrine of Christ's Atonement has been the least controverted of all the tenets of Christianity. Substantial agreement throughout all the Christian age concerning it, furnishes an answer to all objections grounded on the motley aspect of Christian professions. It supplies also solid ground for mutual comprehension in the brotherhood of believers.

But the comparative rarity of such controversy creates some difficulty in the proof desired. In the nature of things, admitted truths are not sharply defined. It needs opposition to bring into exercise the critical faculty. During more than one half, and that the first, of the duration of Christianity on earth, there was no attempt at anything more than a simple implication or casual statement of this doctrine. It is rather taken for granted everywhere, than formally set forth anywhere. Even during the theological ferment of the Refor-

mation there was no definition of it put forth; for there was no controversy with Rome about it. The true basis of Christianity has thus been all along contained in the history of the Church. The scope of the history has been the display of the reception, by the world, of the announcement of the Divine redemption offered in the Gospel, to a race disordered by sin. To state the evidence as to this—to show that the many voices of Christendom utter a response to one and the same truth—is the aim of the present volume.

Faith,—a personal belief in the fact that Jesus Christ died to save sinners, that the sacrifice so made is adequate and available, and has availed,—is, in the following treatise, regarded as the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity. The possession of this faith has always been associated with a life whose aims are piety and virtue. In other respects it has been found associated with the most diverse and variable belief. But from the day when Jesus was pointed out to the disciples by John the Baptist, “Behold the Lamb of God!” faith in Him has been the distinction of the school. This is the basis of the new life, the new state, the new fellowship. This is the one quality which we try to detect and display in our examination of Church history. We say, with Neander, “What deeper employment can there be for Christian

thought, than to follow everywhere the steps of the Son of God?"

We admit, to the fullest extent, that there exists, on this subject, a diversity of statement unparalleled in any other,—a diversity displayed by expositors and commentators of all ages, nay, by the sacred writers themselves; but we affirm that, in and throughout all this, there exists subordination to the axiom, "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

	PAGE
Nature and Necessity of the Argument.—Basis of Revelation.— Teaching of our Lord—Of the Evangelists—Of the Apostles. —Scope of New Testament Doctrine.—Propositions stated . . .	3

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURES.

The Divine Purpose.—Our Lord's Announcement.—Pauline and Petrine Statements.—Scope and Sum of the Gospels.—Chris- tianity truly Supernatural.—Christianity has a true Historical Basis	9
---	---

CHAPTER III.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

The Fathers.—Diffusion of the Gospel from East to West.—Cle- ment.—Ignatius.—Polycarp.—Justin.—Irenæus.—Tertullian. Clement of Alexandria.—The Martyrs.—Testimony of Primi- tive Christianity to the Doctrine now called Evangelical . . .	23
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.

Novatian.—Athanasius.—Gregory of Nazianzen.—Alexandrian School.—Origen.—Chrysostom.—St. Augustine.—The African Church	43
---	----

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE FATHERS TO THE SCHOOLMEN.

PAGE

Irish Saints.—John of Damascus.—The Paulicians.—Cæsarius.— Gregory the Great.—Alcuin.—Alfred.—Claudius of Turin.— The Dark Ages.—Scattered Lights in the West.—Duns Scotus Erigena	57
---	----

CHAPTER VI.

THE ELEVENTH TO THE THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

Anselm.—St. Bernard.—Aquinas and his Contemporaries and Successors.—Disputes concerning the Freedom of the Will.— Conventual Piety.—Palmario.—Peter de Bruys.—St. Vincent de Ferrier.—Bonaventura.—Revolt against Romanism.— Waldo.—The Vaudois.—St. Francis de Salles	75
--	----

CHAPTER VII.

THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES.

Opposers of Romanism.—Beghards.—Savonarola.—Raymond Lulli.—Richard St. Victor.—Attempts at Reform.—Rise of Religious Dissent.—Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln.—Bohemia.— Precursors of Huss.—Formulas of Belief	99
--	----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

Concealed Evangelical Sentiment.—Wycliff.—The Mystics.— John of Wesel.—John of Goch and others.—Theories of the Atonement	115
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Dawn of the Reformation.—Tyndale.—Luther.—Melancthon.— Zwingle.—Lefevre.—The Italian and Spanish Reformers.— Becon.—English Reformers.—Calvin and the French.—Efforts for Unity.—Confessions of Reformed Churches and of Council of Trent.—Baptists of the Netherlands	133
--	-----

CHAPTER X.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

	PAGE
Bohemia.—Quakers.—Hooker.—Elizabethan Divines.—Puritan Theology.—Assembly's Catechism and others.—Bunyan.— Jacqueline Pascal.—The Papal Church.—The Testimony of Prayer.—Bunyan on Principle of Union	177

CHAPTER XI.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The Revivalists—Wesley, Whitefield, and their Fellow-workers. Halyburton.—The Hills.—Hervey.—Lady Glenorchy.—Re- vivals	201
---	-----

CHAPTER XII.

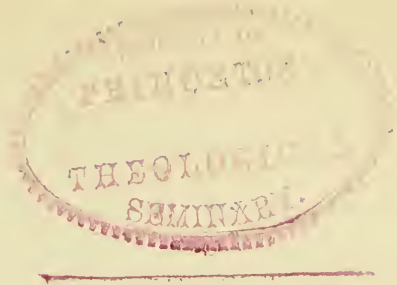
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Summing - up.—Wilberforce.—Modern Theological Schools.— Central Truths.—Change in Form only.—Robert Hall and Dr. Ellicott.—Möehler and the Catholics.—McCall and the Independents.—Dying Testimonies.—American Churches.— Recapitulation of Argument.—Conclusion	217
--	-----

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

“ In the cross of Christ I glory,
 Towering o’er the wrecks of time ;
All the light of sacred story
 Gathers round its head sublime.”



THE HISTORY AND UNITY OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IF the spectacle offered to the world by Christianity were that of a creed about which all opinions differ, it would in vain solicit the suffrages of men as worthy of all acceptance on the ground of its Divine origin, since it is inconceivable that God should be the Author of confusion. To the transient observer, however, it undoubtedly displays this aspect, and on this ground many persons altogether deny its claims. Closer observation, an amount of attention that every subject requiring investigation demands, utterly disperses this hasty conclusion, and establishes the fact that, amidst all the apparent diversity there is a real concord—that all the divergences are correlated in the one great heaven-born truth, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. This being so, we claim the history of the Christian ages as a witness for, instead of against, the cause of Christianity. The

establishment of this statement, simply as matter of fact, is our scope and object.

The plan of salvation displayed in the revelations which God has successively made, is by Him submitted to man's criticism and consideration. It appeals to all his rational and emotional faculties, and having in its reception been mixed up with the history and progress of nations, it is peculiarly open to study and research.

In the first place, it is well grounded in the instincts of our nature. Plato, in his "Republic," says, with approval, that the poets "persuade not only individuals, but whole cities, that expiation and atonement for sin may be made by sacrifices, . . . and they redeem us from the pains of hell; but if we neglect them no one knows what awaits us." * Revelation fulfils this preamble: it offers to us evangelical religion, and asks on it our verdict and acceptance. The trial has proceeded on a large scale; it is still going on.

Surely the concurrent testimony of human nature, in so many ages and conditions, in favour of the doctrine of a vicarious atonement, is no mean proof of the Divine origin of the latter. Its accordance with the religious convictions of mankind is some evidence that redemption is equally Divine with creation.

Throughout all the ages of Christendom, underlying all its manifestations, enduring in all its controversies, triumphing in all its trials, living in

* Jowett's "Plato," vol. ii., p. 186.

spite of its defections, and ever and again springing up into augmented life, there has existed a principle of trust in the Divine revelation concerning our Lord Jesus Christ as acting on man's behalf. This principle has accomplished unity and established brotherhood among men, beyond all that politics, or conquest, or self-interest, or blood, or race, or language, or commerce, have ever effected.

We will endeavour to trace the history of this principle in the world. We have termed it a principle of trust, because it has its earthly roots in the will of man. As Aquinas says, "In the realm of faith the will has the pre-eminence." *

As to its origin, outside of mankind, our Lord declares that the love of God towards sinners is its fount; that redemption—*i.e.*, the forgiveness and remission of sins obtained by the obedience and sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ—is the method of salvation; that the knowledge of this is true spiritual light; that life, life eternal, is the subject and end of this salvation—a life imparted now, by the power of God the Holy Spirit, through the truth manifested by Jesus Christ. Scripture further says that this faith effects not only a change of state, but a change of heart and life, developed in obedience unto holiness; the drawing near to the Divine provision, the laying hold of it with

* The place assigned to the will by Kant is remarkable. He says: "There is nothing in the world which can be termed absolutely and altogether good, a good will excepted."

confidence, producing contemporaneously repentance towards God and practical gratitude for Divine mercy.

In effect this objective belief and the subjective change of regeneration are inseparable. But their actual subsistence is by no means co-extensive with the pretensions of nominal Christianity. Hence the difficulties of our task: to separate off, and totally disregard, first, the instances in which the profession of Christianity has, by an altered meaning of words, become a belief, not in Christ, but in some counterfeit or substitute; and secondly, the case of those who have made a profession of true faith, but have made it unwarrantably.

Scientific theology—that is to say, the orderly expression of religious truth—has changed, and may change again. But the truth itself, whether enfolded in the loose wrapper of rhetoric, the coloured robe of emotional language, or the didactic expression of the scholar, remains the same. Amidst the varied manifestations, however, it is right that the intellect should rule. The latter is not the working power, but it is the final court of appeal.

II.

THE SCRIPTURES.

“The tidings of salvation deare
Come to our eares from hence ;
The fortresse of our faith is here,
And shield of our defence.”

(Thomas Jordan, 1616.)

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURES.

THE Scriptures, alike of the Old and New Testament, regard man, in his present condition, as having transgressed God's holy law, and God as having a purpose and plan of redemption requiring man's concurrence for its effect. The communication of the Divine plan and the history of the human concurrence form the subjects of the sacred narrative. The whole of the phenomena connected with the past, present, and future of humanity are thus removed from the idea of chance or natural evolution, and lifted into the region of Divine purpose; and the appeal to man made by God is resolved into the proffer of suitable evidence for his understanding, and suitable affections for his heart,—the grand result being the glorification of God, and of believers, through the work of Christ, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit, imparted on the reception of the revealed truth.

Before proceeding, we should note that the intimations of our Lord Himself concerning the purpose of His death, and of the sufferings connected

with it, are given with increasing frequency and clearness as His life on earth progressed; and so also is its twofold character, embracing objectively the giving of Christ to God for man, and subjectively the communication of the influences of this sacrificed life to the hearts and natures of believers.

Our blessed Lord announces Himself as having come to call sinners to repentance, to seek and save that which was lost, to give His life as a ransom, to shed His blood for the remission of sins, to communicate a new life to the believer, to give the Holy Ghost and eternal life to all who receive Him. Thus we see how entirely Christianity springs from Christ; and how trust in God, which makes the essential difference in man's state, is effectuated by special faith in Christ as a Redeemer. The direct utterances of our Lord respecting His death, and the place which it must have in the work of redemption, and the truth enshrined in the institution of the Lord's Supper, alike prove that the scope and purpose of the former was to atone for the sins of mankind.

Jesus told Nicodemus that "God sent not His Son to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved;" and, in explanation of this revelation, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Ever since this communication there have been those who have believed on Christ, and have been saved through Him.

The work of our Lord is not only consistent with, but is the fulfilment of, the first promise made by God to man. A Divine grace is declared, a Divine purpose indicated, a Divine method shadowed forth, whereby the ruin made by sin should be replaced by a restoration effected in its midst. In the language of the Ambrosian hymn :—

“O admirable Mystery !
The sins of all are laid on Thee ;
And Thou, to cleanse the world's deep stain,
As man dost bear the sins of men.
What can be ever more sublime !
That grace might meet the guilt of time,
Love doth the bonds of fear undo,
And death restores our life anew.” *

The redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whereby our relation to God is changed, on our believing in Him, from a state of condemnation to a state of acquittance, has been the subject of the joyful thanks of professing Christians in all ages ; and in every instance the subject of so great a gift has striven to please the glorious Giver by endeavours, more or less successful, to conform to His will.

An admirable, and at the same time critical, *consensus* of the New Testament doctrine on the subject of the atonement, may be found in Bishop Thomson's Essay on the Death of Christ, contributed to the volume called “Aids to Faith.” † It is there shown that the writings of the three first Evangelists contain passages which plainly imply the whole doc-

* “Voice of Christian Life in Song.”

† Murray, 1863.

trine of sacrifice; that the institution of the Lord's Supper expressly contains it; that St. John's Gospel, in the account of our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, directly asserts it, as well as our Lord Himself in His addresses recorded there; and that it was the leading theme of the apostles in the early acts of the church.

The Pauline statement of the grounds of a sinner's forgiveness is thrown into a judicial form for the sake of elucidation. The apostle assumes that all men are arraigned before God the Judge: the law of God is the authority, its non-fulfilment is the charge, conscience is the sufficient witness, Christ the intercessory Advocate, the fulfilment of the law in our nature the plea in satisfaction. He also carefully shows that the adoption of this plea works a change in the accused, as well as procures a reversal of the impending sentence. Pardon is thus obtained for the sinner, and righteousness wrought in the believer. Faith is the appropriating instrument,—good works the inevitable fruit and testimony.

The Jacobean statement dwells on the fruits of faith and the utter worthlessness of fruitless professions. St. James regards the matter *ab extrâ*; whilst Paul looks from the centre of the life, the root principle. The Epistle of James presupposes an acquaintance with the doctrine of grace. The views which he gives of God's mercy are utterly unintelligible without this. The encouragements offered to believers under trials, the title which he

gives to our Lord, his anticipation of the Second Coming,—all presuppose an acceptance of the Divine Person and work of Christ. He wrote to vindicate this from the charge, or against the practice, that would turn it all into a mere dogma, without corresponding fruits in the Christian life, and therefore employs himself exclusively in establishing the permanence and obligation of the moral law, and the fruitlessness and falsehood of a mere profession of faith.

More specific is the doctrine of St. Peter. His memorable sermons during the first proclamation of Christianity, supply the key to all his writings. He sets forth Jesus as God, as the foretold Messiah, and His death as the fulfilment of prophecy. In like manner he connects with a Divine promise the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The relative condition of the world and the church of believers in Christ at the first, is displayed and illustrated in 1 Peter ii. 12. On the one side we have the incredulous, carnal, evil-minded heathen, carping and opposing Christianity,—on the other, we see a few bold but humble persons, professing, by faith in a crucified Redeemer, to have received through Him God's forgiveness, and with that, new motives for a higher and more spiritual morality; and all this in view of present loss and of a future unseen gain. The scattered believers were everywhere spoken of as evil-doers, and they are exhorted by the apostle to answer this by consistent and honourable conduct, and by works of benevolence

and mercy, which all the world, heathen and Christian, have agreed to call good.

The idea of redemption is the main truth of the whole Bible. From Genesis to Revelation this is the reason of the communication. A redemption, too, which with pardon brings purity, with change of state brings change of will, with knowledge brings power.

The methods in which the Evangelists set forth the words of Christ differ just as the men themselves differ. This one dwells on one aspect of the truth, and that on another. Yet the truth itself is one. It needs no argument to prove that this is also the case with the inspired expounders of His word,—the writers of the Epistles. The truth itself is so rich in meaning that it will be found to contain adaptations to all states and conditions of heart and mind. Inasmuch, therefore, as the apprehension and estimate of the truth by different persons will vary, so is it natural that each should exaggerate the importance of that which he presently deals with.

From the beginning, the true gospel, the glad tidings of restoration to God's favour, has been a provision made and announced on the side of God,—intimated at the fall, exhibited in the institution of sacrifice, unfolded by the prophets, brought in and wrought out, finally and fully, by the Divine Saviour. The sin-offering, the central point in the Mosaic ritual, was instituted to secure atonement for personal guilt. It could only be presented efficaciously by one who felt real repentance; but,

if so presented, it brought him who presented it into a new relationship to God, by his faith in the Divinely-appointed Substitute. It was at once objective and subjective. The same characteristic has ever been the living power of God's gospel.

To examine all the phenomena of a vast and varied Christian profession, to read its language, to point to its monuments, to trace out its effects, to endeavour to show its true value,—is surely a work the objects of which justify its attempt.

Some recent writers have endeavoured to trace back Christianity, not to Christ, but to the Greek intellect working on the narrations of the Evangelists. Some to a remoter source,—the natural development of Judaism. According to the rationalistic conception, religion is a department of general culture; all the stages of Christianity, including the teaching of our Lord Himself, are parts of a continual evolution in human nature, still progressing. It says that the course of improvement has now arrived at a stage when and where all idea of the supernatural will be eliminated, and all the so-called peculiar doctrines of the gospel must be dropped as things of the past. Dr. Newman, in his work on the subject, adopts the idea of successive development, but places its results under the guardianship of the infallible authority of the Pope,—a whimsical combination, which cannot be accepted.

On the contrary, we shall prove that Christianity, as we now possess it, is older than Greek subtleties

or Jewish conceptions, and that its history is a development, but not an evolution. Its progress has been that of successive generations of learners over one great lesson, the truth and beauty of which are infinite. If we do stand on the shoulders of our forefathers, and see further than they did into the "infinite azure," we only discern more of that infinite love which delighted and satisfied them.

According to the Scriptures, Christianity is a great remedial system, definite, unique, provided by God, finding its echo, but not its origin, in man's soul. Redemption is a real addition to the knowledge and emotional thought of mankind. Thus says Neander :—

"The announcement of redemption to a race burdened with sin constitutes the essence of Christianity, and consequently points to a fact which could not proceed from history, but must be of higher origin. The very idea of redemption indicates this, and not less so the life of Christ, which cannot be understood in the same way as that of any other man; but, as He is to be conceived of only as the Redeemer of humanity, so His life must be viewed as a new creation in humanity." *

The proposition intended to be maintained and illustrated in this volume is, that during all the ages, and amidst all the varieties of Christendom, there has been a belief that forgiveness of sin and eternal blessing are obtained for the believer by Jesus Christ. There has not been

* "Relation of Dogma to Christianity," chap. i.

unity in theory as to the method of His intervention; but there has been, and there is, unity in it as a fact, and as the main fact of Christianity. Many, perhaps the majority of Christians, have held this truth without any definite formula of expression; they connected their own sense of personal forgiveness and favour with the work of Christ, and it sufficed them. They believed in their own release from penalty and title to happiness on the ground of some transaction effected, and on the testimony of some promise given. Others could give no formula beyond the Apostles' Creed: "I believe . . . in Jesus Christ our Lord, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and arose from the dead."

The learned have held creeds and catechisms, formulated by councils, synods, conferences, or assemblies, but a far larger number of persons have rested their faith and hope on some simple Scripture—such as the declaration that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—some Divine utterance, blessed by God the Holy Spirit to conviction, and, when received, acting as a perennial fountain of obedience, love, and life.

Christianity has a historical connection as well as a historical basis. A place must be assigned to it amongst the great continuous facts in the world. It is constantly before us, demanding investigation. No learner of the past, no reader of the present,

can put it by. We contend that, from the first, the language used by Christian men respecting the Divine Saviour proves that the latter has ever been regarded as the means and way to God's forgiveness and favour. We do not allege the uniform use of words or phrases, such as imputation or satisfaction, but that in an actual potent sense such an idea has pervaded and does pervade Scriptural faith.

The varieties of human language, to common observation, appear to amount to total dissimilarity, but the philological ear detects certain root-words in all, which prove unity and common origin. So in theology: amidst all its apparent discordance, the cultivated ear detects the strains of one Divine melody. The recognition of this truth may remove one reproach attached to modern Christianity. Adolph Saphir says:—

“Our theology (even that of believers) is far too abstract, unhistorical; looking at doctrines logically, instead of viewing them in connection with the history of the kingdom and the church. It is Japhetic, not Shemitic; it is Roman, logical, well arranged, methodized, and scheduled; not Eastern, according to the spirit and method of Scripture, which breathes in the atmosphere of a living God, who visits His people, and is coming again to manifest His glory.”*

The “living way” which Christ opened—the doctrine of His atonement—has had the most continuous history of any dogma or opinion known

* “Christ and the Scriptures,” p. 75.

among men. Whilst philosophy shows us tenets successively elevated into transient importance by the ability of individual teachers, whilst false religions have exhibited beliefs propagated, with fading grasp, down through many generations, *this* has displayed one single unvarying truth, upheld in the faith of its adherents through nineteen centuries.

We may be met by the statement that the resemblances which we profess to discover, are nullified or contravened by the variances that have undoubtedly accompanied them. Such apparent contradiction was to have been expected. Things being as they are, in an evil world, good can only advance by antagonisms, and accompanied by misrepresentation. This was foretold by our Lord. It has been realized in the whole career of Christianity.

Amidst the din of present conflict it is lawful to claim for Christianity, unity in truth. The times are favourable for it. Never, before now, has there been so general an avowal that Christ is the only basis of Christianity. Never, before, now has humanly-constructed dogma been held in such light esteem. The multiplication of sects in modern times, appears only to multiply witnesses to the solidarity of true Christianity. Schisms and divisions in the church cannot rob Christianity of its essential character. A review of the past will also serve to show that former ages, so dark to us, were not wholly so to those who dwelt in them.

III.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

“Thou art our holy Lord,
The all-subduing Word,
Healer of strife !
Thou didst Thyself abase,
That from sin's deep disgrace
Thou mightest save our race,
And give us life.”

(Clement of Alexandria, about A. D. 200.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

THERE is no sharp historical line where the miraculous endowments imparted to the apostles and first believers terminate. These sacred gifts were so clearly apart from ordinary action, that their possession, made no difference in the manifestation of personal qualities. Peter and Paul were, for all purposes which ally them to us, men of like passions and infirmities with ourselves. Their acceptance and exhibition of the truth of the gospel was like ours, in all common joy and common weakness. It is therefore amongst the immediate companions of our Lord, and the sharers in the powers of Pentecost, that we may look for the beginnings of ordinary evangelical life.

As if to hold out hope to the whole world, Christianity has manifested itself in turn in Asia Minor, Africa, Europe, and America. It has been displayed in the lives and experiences of men of every race into which the learned divide mankind.

Well does D'Aubigné remark :—

“ The inhabitants of Jerusalem, of Asia, of Greece, and of Rome, in the time of the Roman Emperors, had heard this gospel : ‘ Ye are saved by grace—through faith—it is

the gift of God ;' and at this voice of peace, at the sound of these good tidings, at this word of power, multitudes of sinners believed, and were attracted to Him who alone can give peace to the conscience ; and numerous societies of believers were formed in the midst of the degenerate communities of that age."*

The acts and writings of the good men who immediately succeeded the apostles, and derived their knowledge of Christianity from their oral teachings and living example, are almost a part of Christianity itself, and are rightly consulted as evidence of what it was ere the mists of time had obscured any of its outlines.

The only writing undoubtedly belonging to the very age of the apostles—the first century—is the epistle of Clement to the Corinthians. There appears to be no reason to doubt the statement of Eusebius that Clement was bishop of Rome (whatever in those early days the office of a bishop of Rome indicated), the third in succession from the apostles, or that he became so in the latter half of the first century.

The epistle which we have, bears evidence of having been written at the close of some persecution,—a significant circumstance truly ! The first secular utterance of the church of Christ opens with the strain,—“ The sudden and repeated dangers and calamities which have befallen us.”

Clement exhorts to repentance as follows :—

* “ Hist. of Reformation,” vol. i. p. 23.

“Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious it is to God His Father, which being shed for our salvation, brought the grace of repentance to all the world.” *

And to obedience :—

“Let us revere the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us.”

And to Christian love :—

“In love the Lord received us ; because of the love which He had towards us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave His blood for us by the will of God, and His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls.”

We prefer to sum up this testimony in the words of Mr. Temple Chevallier :—

“Clement speaks of the necessity of spiritual aid to enlighten our understanding—says that we are not justified by ourselves, neither by our own wisdom or knowledge or piety in the works which we have done in holiness of heart, but by that faith by which Almighty God hath justified all men from the beginning. He speaks plainly of the atonement by the blood of Christ ; ‘which was given for us,’ and is precious in the sight of God ; which being shed for our salvation, hath obtained the grace of repentance to the whole world. He is careful also to show the necessity of repentance and holiness, of peace and humility, after the example of our Lord ; and that they who have the love of Christ should keep His commandments, and endeavour to advance in all godliness, in firm hope of a resurrection to immortality and glory.” †

* “The Epistle of Clement,” translated, with notes, by B. Harris Cowper, (Religious Tract Society,) pp. 52, 60, 92.

† Chevallier “On Epistles of Clement,” etc., p. 20, preface.

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch about the year 70, a man of ardent religiousness, fell under the heathen persecution, was condemned by Trajan, and carried to Rome and martyred there about the year 107. His writings consist of letters written by him from Ephesus, whilst he halted on his way to Rome as a prisoner sentenced to be thrown to the wild beasts.

In one place he speaks of Christ as the One “who gave Himself to God, an offering and sacrifice for us.” In another he says:—

“Let fire and the cross and the companies of wild beasts, let tearings and rendings, let the breaking of bones and the cutting off of limbs, let the shatterings of the whole body and all the evil torments of the devil come upon me, only let me attain unto Jesus Christ. All the pleasures of the world and the kingdoms of this life will avail me nothing. Him I seek who died for us. Him I desire who rose again for us. This is the gain that is laid up for me.”*

Polycarp, the aged bishop of Smyrna, who could reply to his persecutors, “Fourscore-and-six years have I continued to serve Christ,” was an Asiatic who had received instruction from the apostle John. He says:—

“Let us therefore without ceasing hold steadfastly to Him who is our hope, and the earnest of our righteousness, even Jesus Christ, who ‘bare our sins in His own body on the tree.’ Who ‘did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.’ But endured all for our sakes, that we might live through Him. Let us therefore imitate His patience, and if we suffer for His sake, let us glorify Him. For this

* Ignatius’ Epistle to the Romans.

example He hath given us by Himself, and so we have believed."*

About the year 132, Justin, a Greek gentleman in the colony planted at Sichem, and an enthusiastic student of the Platonic school of philosophy, became convinced of the truth of the religion of Jesus Christ. He embraced, avowed, publicly taught it, and wrote in its defence. About the year 168 he was martyred at Rome, on his refusal to offer sacrifice to the heathen gods. He held to the great fact of the atonement made by Christ on the cross, but not with pristine simplicity. We miss the definite ring of unmixed apostolic truth. He says:—

"If you repent of your sins, if you acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, and if by keeping His commandments you acknowledge that the Father has willed that He should suffer these things in order that we should be healed by His wounds, you will obtain the pardon of your sins."†

We perceive the earthy particles of worldly wisdom, discolouring the clear stream.

"Hear also in what manner it was prophesied, that He should be made man for us; and submit to suffer and be set at naught, and should come again with glory. The words are these: 'Because He hath given up His soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors; He hath borne the sins of many, and shall make intercession for the transgressors.'‡

* "Epistle of Polycarp": Temple Chevallier, p. 50.

† Dial. with Trypho.

‡ "Justin Martyr": Temple Chevallier, p. 203.

Justin lovingly recognises and adores in Him “the eternal and ineffable Word of God, who was made man, that, by Himself sharing our sufferings, we might be healed.” *

“This eternal Jesus, this great and sole High Priest of the one God who is His Father, prays for all men, and upon earth He ceases not to exhort them. Oh! all ye nations, hearken unto me! Whosoever you are, endowed with reason, Greeks or Barbarians, hearken. My words are to that whole race of man whom I created by the will of the Father. Come unto me, and take upon you the law of the one God and of His word.”

We have one precious relic, probably of the second century, which clearly expresses the faith of a believer in the work of Christ, in language which reminds us of the true simplicity of this Divine knowledge in all ages. It is the letter to Diognetus, written by an unknown author, with the view of convincing a pagan concerning the truth of the Gospel. It is the work of a warm-hearted, sensible person, wholly free from the tendencies to formulate Christianity into scientific order—an attempt in which its spirit often evaporated. He distinguishes Christianity as a revelation of redemption, and presses its claims in this character. He says :—

“God does not hate us, He is not mindful of our iniquities, He has borne with our sins, and has given us His dear Son, as the price of our redemption, the just for the

* Justin Martyr, ‘*Apologia*,’ as quoted by Pressensé : “*Martyrs and Apologists*,” p. 364.

unjust. Justice alone could forgive transgression. O happy exchange which is effected, so that the iniquities of many are covered by the righteousness of one, and the obedience of one justifies the many sinners!"

The outworking of this Divine truth in the human heart is also clearly laid down, and the place of reason as regards faith well and truly indicated:—

"The Son was not sent, as might have been imagined, to exercise rule and spread terror. No; He is come in mercy and benignity. God has sent Him as a king who sends his son—himself a king; for He has sent Him as a God amongst men, to save, to persuade,—and not to force, for violence is not of God."

In this beautiful letter we are still standing in the after-glow of the great luminary. The truth and love in Christ's teaching have not yet faded from the horizon.

Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, born probably at Smyrna before A.D. 150, fond of recounting how Polycarp used to speak of his discourses with the apostle John, and of recalling the sayings of the apostles, became the great missionary to Gaul. He established the church at Lyons, and throughout all the region was a true missionary of the cross. He says:—

"If a man has not overthrown the foe, a triumph would be unjust. There is, therefore, the need of a real substitution made by Christ as representing humanity. Redemption is the victory of holy obedience effected by the new Head of our race over the power of evil, which had held us

captive. All the necessary conditions have been realized by the incarnation of Christ, by the merciful substitution of the Son of God for humanity, or rather by the free adoption, the correspondence between His love and our need. By His great love He became what we were, that we might become what He is. . . . In this sense Christ has redeemed us by His own blood, has given His life for ours, His flesh for ours. Since His ascension He works powerfully for the church, He communicates to it His Holy Spirit, He leads it and nurses it into life. For us He has suffered, for us He rose again. God Himself gave up His own Son a ransom for us, the holy for the unholy, the good for the evil, the just for the unjust, the incorruptible for the corruptible, the immortal for the mortal. For what else could cover our sins but His righteousness? In whom was it possible for us, the unholy and the ungodly, to be justified except the Son of God alone? O sweet exchange! O wonderful operation! O unlooked-for benefit! That the sinfulness of many should be hidden in one, that the righteousness of one should justify many ungodly."

Tertullian was a Carthaginian by birth, the son of a Roman soldier. He was born about the year 150. In the turbulent writings of this the first of the Latin Fathers, we find the essential doctrine of Christianity always implied and sometimes expressed. The great Carthaginian controversialist was the leader and forerunner of the ascetics, and the real founder, in principle, of much of the Roman system. Yet he insists most energetically on the absolute necessity and infinite value of the incarnation and death of our Lord. He adopts and illustrates the apostles' symbol:—

“The blood which redeems us is the blood of an innocent victim.”

“The death of Christ is the essence of the Gospel.”

In Tertullian we miss the “simplicity that is in Christ”; we seem to have lost sight of apostolic land, and to have become surrounded by the waves of human opinion. His writings are resorted to, not by those who are in need of the peace which Christianity gives, but by such as need an apology for the human additions to the Gospel, made in the Latin Church in successive ages. Sacramentarianism and voluntary humility have begun their work in the church.

Clement of Alexandria,—an accomplished and travelled gentleman, all his life a student,—became converted from heathenism to Christianity at Alexandria, about the year 180.

The following words show what he had learned:—

“No hindrance stands in the way of him who is bent on the knowledge of God. Neither childlessness, nor poverty, nor obscurity, nor want, can hinder him who eagerly strives after the knowledge of God; Christ is able to save in every place. For he that is fired with ardour and admiration for righteousness, being the lover of One who needs nothing, needs himself but little, having treasured up his bliss in nothing but himself and God, where is neither moth, robber, nor pirate, but the eternal Giver of good. . . . Believe Him, who is man and God! Believe, O man, the living God, who suffered and is adored! Believe, ye slaves, Him who died! Believe, all ye of human kind, Him who alone is God of all men!”

A modern church historian thus summarizes:—

“It is evident, from this examination of the very brief writings of the Apostolic Fathers, that they recognised the doctrine of atonement for sin by the death of the Redeemer as one taught in the Scriptures, and especially in the writings of those three great apostles, John, Paul, and Peter, at whose feet they had most of them been brought up. They did not, however, venture beyond the phraseology of Scripture ; and they attempted no *rationale* of the dogma. Their unanimous and energetic rejection of the doctrine of justification by works evinces that they did not stand upon the position of legalism. The evangelical tenet was heartily and earnestly held in their religious experience, but it was not drawn forth from this its warm and glorious home into the cool and clear light of the intellect and of theological science. The relations of this sacrificial death to the justice of God on the one hand, and to the conscience of man on the other—the judicial reasons and grounds of this death of the most exalted of personages—were left to be investigated and exhibited in later ages, and by other generations of theologians.” *

The doctrine concerning the atonement, afterwards fully expressed by St. Augustine and formulated philosophically by Anselm, actually and fully existed in the minds of the Apostolic Fathers. But we must not look, in the pages of the history of thought of any kind, for the exact counterparts, in distant ages, of our own style of expression.

There is something impressive in the theology of the martyrs and confessors, for it sprang from the life. They may not have been great in learning, or complete in doctrine, but they lived and died for

* Shedd's "History of Christian Doctrine," vol. ii. p. 211.

Christ. All that they have left us of their sayings, was part of the action of their lives, and is entitled to the consideration due to testimony uttered under the apprehension of certain and violent death.

The different degrees of persuasion, and the different aspects of truth, attained by different minds, at first sight appear to militate against the doctrine that all are taught by the same Spirit. This is not so. So far as all receive the same truths they are equally taught of Him. But the Spirit's teaching is connected with the disciple's receptivity, and this varies immensely with the individual and the age.

Mr. Westcott, happily, confidently writes :—

“In the last quarter of the second century we emerge at length into the full light of Christian history. . . . From this time Christian writers speak to us with voices full and manifold, in which he who will may follow the simple strains of faith, mingled and at times confounded, yet never wholly lost, amidst strange sounds of strife, of violence, of pride.” *

And Dean Milman says of the first Christian communities :—

“They were held together by common sympathies, common creeds, common sacred books, certain as yet simple, but common rites, common usages of life.” †

The primitive Christians were one in sentiment to a degree which we should hardly expect to find,

* “The Bible in the Church,” p. 118.

† “Latin Christianity,” vol. i. p. 2.

considering the isolated situation of the churches at that time. The proofs of this are so well enumerated by Dr. Milligan, that we quote his words :—

“ Among these may be first mentioned the deep interest in the writings of persons of authority in the church, the anxiety to receive them, and the care with which they were preserved. Thus it is that we find Polycarp, in a passage of his epistle to the Philippians—whose genuineness, though questioned, has not yet been disproved—intimating to that church that he has sent to it, *as requested*, the Epistles of Ignatius, by which it might be greatly profited, and at the same time asking that any more certain information which it was able to afford respecting Ignatius and his companions might be sent him in return. Thus it is that we find Pinytus, bishop of the Gnossians, writing to Dionysius of Corinth, upon receipt of a letter addressed by the latter to his church, and exhorting him to impart other and stronger food when he wrote again, that his people might not remain constantly nurtured with milk, or be left to grow old under a discipline fitted only for children. And thus it is that we find Dionysius himself not only writing letters to different churches—the Lacedæmonians, the Athenians, the Gnossians, the Nicomedians, the church of Gortyna and the other churches in Crete, the churches at Anrastris and at Rome—but, in his epistle to the last-mentioned city, expressing the pleasure which his own church had received from the letter of Soter, its bishop, and telling that it had been read in public worship on the Lord’s Day, and that, like the letter of Clement, it had stored their minds with admonition.”

A second circumstance worthy of notice, in connection with the point before us, is the lively inter-

course kept up in early Christian times between churches very distant, and in many respects very different from one another. This intercourse—alluded to so early as St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, iv. 16—meets us everywhere in later times. We see it going on between the churches of Rome and Corinth, between Smyrna and Philippi, from Vienne and Lyons in the west, to Asia and Phrygia in the east; and the fruits of it still survive in some of the most precious remains of Christian antiquity. It was impossible that such intercourse should be in vain. It must have drawn the attention of the different Christian communities, not only to their common faith, but also to its grounds, to the writings which bore witness and gave expression to it, to the sources in which it found its life and confirmation. It must have widened the apprehension of the churches, deepened their spirit of inquiry, and made them more careful than they might otherwise have been in ascertaining that they themselves received the same sacred books as those which were elsewhere honoured, and whose tone of thought, whose very language in many cases, formed the staple of almost every line in the communications that were made to them. A third circumstance, interesting in the same point of view, is the frequent personal intercourse which we know took place between leading members of different churches, the love of travel which marked many of the most distinguished of the early Fathers, and

the delight taken by them, when they met, in comparing notes upon all matters affecting the common faith. In the whole history of the church there is probably nothing, in this respect, more instructive or beautiful than the account given us by Eusebius, from Irenæus, of the intercourse between Polycarp and Anicetus at Rome, in the middle of the second century, when the already venerable Bishop of Smyrna and the Bishop of the Latin capital had some difference between themselves regarding the celebration of Easter and "other matters," and when, after having in vain striven to come to entire uniformity, "they were immediately reconciled, and separated from each other in peace—all the church being at peace." Again, the words of Hegesippus, quoted by the same historian, set before us a perfect picture of the spirit in which such journeys were conducted.

"I passed many days at Corinth," says Hegesippus, "when I was on the point of sailing to Rome, and had familiar intercourse with Primus, bishop there. We were mutually refreshed in the true doctrine. After coming to Rome, I made my stay with Anicetus, whose deacon was Eleutherus. After Anicetus, Soter succeeded, and after him Eleutherus. In every succession, however, and in every city, the doctrine prevails according to what is declared by the law and the prophets and the Lord."

At the same time, Eusebius informs us that he had found, in the commentaries of Hegesippus, that that Father had conversed with most of the bishops

when he travelled to Rome, and had received the same doctrine from them all. Melito, too, bishop of Sardis, tells us that, having been asked by his brother Onesimus, “in his zeal for the Scriptures,” to make selections for him both from the law and the prophets, respecting the Saviour and our whole faith, and also to give him an exact statement of the books of the Old Testament, how many in number, and in what order written, he had endeavoured to perform this.

“When, therefore,” he adds, “I went to the East, and came as far as the place where these things were proclaimed and done, I ascertained with accuracy what the books of the Old Testament are, and now send to you the names.”

Surely this was historical inquiry. It related, it is true, to the books of the Old Testament, which even Christians were as yet accustomed to consider as the principal documentary record of the faith. It is true, also, that the “other matters” which Polycarp discussed with Anicetus may have related only to modes of worship, and not to doctrine. We merely urge that all these incidents prove that there existed at this time a deep interest in sacred historical investigation, properly so called; and that when questions arose, the results of this investigation could not fail to influence the decisions arrived at on these questions.

We are therefore prepared to find, at this early period, much practical agreement in the truth.

We even go a step further, and maintain that under the difference which did exist, owing to dissimilarity in the men and their circumstances, there was actual unity of sentiment concerning the way of salvation.

The great Alexandrian school of Christian thought will not detain us long. It represents the barbaric pomp and treasures of the East and of Ethiopia offered on the altar of the Gospel. It is a rich outburst of spiritual wealth, often overflowing, and often ill-governed, but rolling onwards towards Christ.

At this time, and in this quarter of the world too, the doctrine of the atonement was the real ground of the Christian system.

In explaining the nature and place of repentance, Origen says, "The justification of faith only is sufficient, so that if any person only believe, he may be justified, though no good work hath been fulfilled by him."

The Alexandrine tenets are admirably summed up by the Archbishop of York :—

"No doubt the theories on the subject were indefinite and incomplete; but a greater mistake could not be made than to suppose that the doctrine of satisfaction and substitution was absent from the patristic witnesses, and lay dormant till the voice of Anselm woke it. Origen, who is often said to know nothing of the substitution sufferings of the Lord, asserts them expressly in several passages. Cyril of Jerusalem not less so: 'We were enemies of God, through sin, and God had appointed the sinner to die. One of two

things must needs have happened : that God, keeping His word, should destroy all men, or that in His loving-kindness He should cancel the sentence. But behold the wisdom of God ; He preserved both the truth of His sentence and the exercise of His loving-kindness. Christ took our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live to righteousness.' So Cyril of Alexandria : ' Since they who were the servants of sin were made subject to the punishment of sin, He who was free from sin, and trod the paths of all righteousness, underwent the punishment of sinners, destroying by His cross the sentence of the old curse.' '*

We must be satisfied with finding the manifestation of Christian union in the mutual recognition of certain revealed truths concerning the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. This recognition, too, must often be implied rather than sought in express formularies or arguments. Christianity is life, and was developed, at least in its early days, far more fully in the conduct of its professors than in any of their writings which have come down to us.

* "Aids to Faith," p. 345.

IV.

THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.

“ And idol forms shall perish,
And error shall decay ;
And Christ shall wield His sceptre,
Our Lord and God for aye.”

(From the Greek of Anatolius, A.D. 451.)

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.

IT is related of the late Dr. John Duncan that he was fond of saying that "one stream of doctrine ran through the churches of every age, the general characteristic of which was that it set forth God's excellence and man's vileness. In this catholic truth, as embodied in the ancient creeds of Christendom and in the confessions of all the evangelical churches, he especially delighted. Christian men of all professions, he held, while through misunderstanding they often differed in what they said in regard to Divine truth, agreed wonderfully in what they meant to say." *

Certain it is that from the beginning there have been persons who have had a firm confidence in the fulfilment of Divine promises, and made strenuous endeavours to be obedient to Divine law, and have cherished a precious hope of obtaining the Divine forgiveness through a way revealed by God. Indeed, such persons, under the disadvantage of slender knowledge, yet find their way into the full enjoyment of spiritual life. They prove conversion by their temper and conduct, though probably they

* Brown's "Life of Dr. Duncan," p. 383.

could give no intelligible account of it to the questioner. There are multitudes of Christians who, in personal religious controversy, say to their opponent, with Augustine,—“I know well, when you do not ask me.”

When we find the true fruits of sanctification displayed in the life, we may assume the existence of some solid basis of Scriptural truth believed. We infer the existence of the root of faith from its living, growing flower. Where we find vital Christianity, existing in spite of deadly quarrels respecting other things, or even concerning its own forms, we claim the combatants on both sides as soldiers in the one army of the living God.

About the middle of the third century a schism arose in the Roman church. Each of the two separating parties elected its own bishop. Novatian was the leader of the opposition; under him was formed the first body of dissenters from the dominant church. The separatists, however, held no opinion contrary to the faith of the Gospel.* There was absolutely no contention between the rivals respecting saving truth. Novatian, says Milner, is allowed to have preserved in soundness the Christian faith. Such instances of fundamental agreement between conflicting partisans in the strife for rule, have either been altogether ignored, or have received far less credit than they deserve.

Athanasius, born at Alexandria at the very close of the third century, launched himself on the stormy

* Milner's "Church History," chap. ix.

sea of disputed doctrine at the Council of Nice in A.D. 325. He continued to buffet the tempests of opposition in church and state for forty-six years, alternately victor and vanquished. He was principally engaged in vindicating the doctrine of the true and full divinity of our Lord, against Arius, and held (without controversy) the Pauline belief concerning the purport and effect of Christ's death. He is not so formally scientific in his method as the schoolmen who succeeded him; in the combination of philosophical statement with appeal to Scripture, he rather approaches the method of modern expositors.

“Christ as man endured death for us, inasmuch as He offered Himself for that purpose to the Father. . . Christ takes our sufferings upon Himself, and presents them to the Father, entreating for us that they be satisfied in Him. . . The death of the incarnate *Logos* is a ransom for the sins of men, and a death of death. . . Desiring to annul our death, He took on Himself a body from the Virgin Mary, that by offering this unto the Father, a sacrifice for all, He might deliver us all, who by fear of death were all our life through subject to bondage. . . Laden with guilt, the world was condemned by law, but the *Logos* assumed the condemnation, and, suffering in the flesh, gave salvation to all. . . Suppose that God should merely require repentance in order to salvation? This would not in itself be improper, did it not conflict with the *veracity* of God. God cannot be untruthful even for our benefit. Repentance does not satisfy the demands of truth and justice. If the question pertained solely to the corruption of sin, and not to the guilt and ill-desert of it, repentance might be suffi-

cient. But since God is both truthful and just, who can save in this emergency, but the Logos who is above all created things? He who created men from nothing could suffer for all, and be their Substitute. Hence the Logos appeared: He who was incorporeal, imperishable, omnipresent, manifested Himself. He saw both our misery and the law's threatening; He saw how inadmissible it would be for sin to escape the law, except through a fulfilment and satisfaction of the law. . . . The first and principal ground of the Logos becoming man was that the condemnation of the law, by which we are burdened with guilt and eternal punishment, might be removed by the payment of the penalty."*

Gregory of Nazianzen, amidst the flowers of speech which decorate his profuse rhetoric, yet possessed the root of the true faith, for he says:—

"Christ Himself, though He might have continued in the enjoyment of His own dignity in His divine nature, not only lowered Himself to the form of a servant, but also, despising the shame, submitted to death upon the cross, that by His suffering He might blot out our sins, and by His death destroy death." †

The creed of Lucian, martyred at Nicomedia in 311, is thus given by Hilary:—

"We believe, according to the tradition of the Gospels and apostles, in our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made the mediator between God and men, being foreordained to be the author of our faith and life, who suffered and rose again for us."

* Quotations in Shedd's "Christian Doctrine," vol. ii. p. 240.

† Gregory's Oration on his entrance into the office of Bishop, A.D. 372.

The creed of the Apostolical Constitutions speaks of Christ, who “died for us.”

The Nicene Creed introduces the definite and hearty form, “Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven;”—and this prevailed throughout the whole church, East and West alike.

No truth, or set of truths, has been tried like Christianity. The remains of early Christian literature are the relics of victories. The tattered banners are somewhat faded, but their inscription always remains legible. “*In hoc signum vinces.*” Some of these remains retain much of their freshness, and, being expressive of truths of never-ceasing importance, are still useful in the great continuous war of opinion. Such are many of the utterances of the well-trained and highly-educated Chrysostom, the “golden-mouthed” preacher, born at Antioch about A.D. 354. These are his sentiments:—

“What reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the benefits which He hath done unto me? Who shall express the noble acts of the Lord, or show forth all His praise? He abased Himself that He might exalt thee; He died to make thee immortal; He became a curse that thou mightest obtain a blessing. . . Sin is drowned in the ocean of God’s mercy, just as a spark is extinguished in a flood of water.”

Respecting Chrysostom’s treatment of Holy Scripture, Stephen, his able biographer, says:—

“There is no topic on which he dwells more frequently

and earnestly than on the duty of every Christian man and woman to study the Bible; and what he bade others do, that he did pre-eminently himself. He rebukes the silly vanity of rich people, who prided themselves on possessing finely-written and handsomely-bound copies of the Bible, but who knew little about the contents. The study of the Bible was more necessary for the layman than the monks, because he was exposed to more constant and formidable temptations. The Christian without a knowledge of the Bible was like a workman without tools. Like a tree planted by the water side, the soul of the diligent reader would be continually nourished and refreshed. There were no difficulties which would not yield to a patient study of it. Neither earthly grandeur, nor friends, nor indeed any human thing, could afford in suffering such comfort as Holy Scripture, for this was the companionship of God.*

“We must build on Christ,” said Chrysostom, “and hold to Him as the foundation of the whole edifice. We must adhere to Him as the branch adheres to the vine. Nothing must intervene between us and Christ. If anything should come between us we are immediately lost. The edifice only remains firm by its union with the foundation; if the union should cease to exist, the building will fall. Christ is the head, we are the body; Christ is the road, we are the travellers; Christ is the temple, we are the worshippers; Christ is the life, we are the living. If the branch of the vine is broken, and even in part separated from it, it perishes. In order to live, the branch must continually draw in the sap from the trunk.”†

As this treatise is intended to exhibit only one aspect of subjective truth, displayed in the beliefs

* Stephen’s “St. Chrysostom,” p. 2.

† *Sunday at Home*,—“Chrysostom,” by D’Aubigné, D.D., p. 506.

of persons who have lived in obedience to the Gospel, it must not be charged with incompleteness because it neither mentions the other aspects of the same characters nor the other relations of the same facts. It is not intended to be a church history, nor a series of biographies, but to call attention to those flashes of light which reveal the inner life of sundry representative adherents of evangelical Christianity, down through the ages during which it has existed in the world. Its notices must be chiefly biographical, because such details affect us with an interest which nothing else produces. They serve to assure us of the inconceivable stores of similar knowledge, now latent in the womb of time, to spring again amidst the endless leisure and joy of eternity.

We can be under no difficulty in analysing the inner life of St. Augustine, or in detecting the kernel of his faith. The following chapter from his "Meditations" will do no more than justice to the tenets which formed the foundation of his creed:—

"Almighty God, Father of Jesus my Saviour, grant that by Thy mercy all things may work together for my salvation. I come to offer unto Thee from the bottom of my heart the best and most precious that I have been able to find; I have reserved nothing unto myself, I have offered all to Thy Divine majesty. I have even sacrificed unto Thee all my hopes. I have addressed myself unto Thy only and well-beloved Son. I have prayed Him, as humbly as was possible to me, to be near to Thee my only Intercessor, my only Mediator, to ask of Thee the pardon which I hope of Thy mercy. I come to offer unto Thee

Him who really offered Himself to Himself. I come to offer unto Thee all that He has suffered, even unto death, the merits of which I trust He will apply unto me. I firmly believe that Thou hast sent us Thy Son, who is God as Thou art, that He humbly invested Himself with our humanity, that He willed even to suffer bonds, blows, spitting, the most outrageous scoffing, lastly, the death on the cross, that even after His death His side was pierced with a spear. Our adorable Saviour was no sooner born than He was subject, equally with other children, to all human miseries, with the exception of sin. He had need like them to be wrapped in swaddling clothes. As soon as He was able to walk and act, He mortified His flesh, though innocent, and He mortified it by many fasts, by watchings, by labours, by the most painful journeys. Then He ended His life by a death preceded by punishments as shameful as they were rigorous. But also the third day after such a precious death He came again to life full of glory, He rose to the highest heavens, and He seated Himself at Thy right hand, there to enjoy with Thee eternal felicity. It is only, O my God, by the merits of our Saviour that I hope in Thy mercy. Consider that Thy only Son, whom Thou hast begotten from all eternity, is the same that Thou sent to redeem us from our slavery. In the name of this adorable second Person of the Holy Trinity, by whom alone Thou hast created us, do not reject the work of Thy hands. In the name of this Divine Shepherd receive with mercy this wandering sheep, that He has so long sought with so much kindness, joyfully to carry it upon His own shoulders, and not only to draw it from the deep abyss into which it had fallen, but to tenderly embrace it, and to place it among the number of the ninety-nine who have not strayed. Receive, then, O my God, all-powerful King, sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, this faithless sheep that this Good Shepherd brings Thee, to whom alone Thou

hast confided it. He only took upon Himself our nature to purify it from every stain, then to offer it to Thee, and to procure for it eternal salvation. Thy creature, O God, has wandered far from Thee, but canst Thou not forget all his wanderings? It is Thy well-beloved Son who draws into the bosom of Thy mercy this wandering sheep that the enemy of Thy flock had borne away from it—this rebel servant, who since his sin had only fled so far from Thee because he could not sustain the brilliancy of Thy presence, so terrible to a sinner. May we, O my God, not only hope for the pardon of our sins, but also for the happiness of arriving at length into Thy celestial country, under the conduct of a guide who is no less than Thy only Son."

In another place Augustine thus soliloquizes:—

"Why, O my Divine Saviour, wert Thou considered to be deserving of treatment so harsh, of a death at once so shameful and cruel? What could be the cause of such a condemnation? It is my sin, O Lord, that made Thee suffer thus; it was my own transgressions which thus occasioned Thy death. I alone am the means of Thy punishment and cruel sufferings. The just suffers the death which the sinner has merited; the guilty one is absolved, the innocent one condemned. The Saint of saints suffers death for the crimes of the impious. That which a wicked man deserves, is the spring of the benevolence which endures it for him; the master expiates the fault of the servant; in a word, it is God who blots out the sins of men."*

And again:—

"In Cicero and Plato and other such writers I meet with many things acutely said, and things that awaken some

* "Meditations," chap. vii.

fervour and desire, but in none of them do I find the words, 'Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"*

More specifically in relation to our present topic, he writes:—

"We must not so conceive of the reconciliation of man as if God required blood in order to forgive men; but we should understand it in the sense that God loved man before the creation of the world, and His love was the very cause of His sending His Son into the world; not as though God now first began to love those whom He before hated, as an enemy becomes reconciled with his enemy, but we are reconciled with Him who already loved us, with Him whose enemies *we* were by transgression."†

The essential nature of the doctrines so clearly perceived, firmly held, and abundantly expounded by Augustine, is manifested by their universal acceptance as the basis of evangelical faith. Professor Bindemann, in his great work on this Church Father, says of him:—

"In importance he takes rank behind no teacher who has laboured since the days of the apostles. It may well be said that the first place among the Church Fathers is due to him; and at the time of the Reformation, only a Luther, by reason of the fulness and depth of his spirit and his nobleness of character, was worthy to stand at his side. He is the highest point of the development of the Western church before the middle ages. From him the mysticism no less than the scholasticism of the middle ages has drawn its life; he forms the mightiest pillar of

* Conf.

† Cited by Neander, vol. viii. p. 277.

Roman Catholicism ; and the leaders of the Reformation derived from his writings, next to the study of the Holy Scriptures, especially the Paulinian epistles, those principles which gave birth to a new era." *

His sentiments were affirmed by African councils, and maintained at Rome. Disputes there were as to their logical consequences, but not as to the facts relied on. Especially in France were they the subject of hot controversy. It is impossible now to define how much of evangelical truth underlaid the din of logic and wordy warfare thus originated. Pelagius, in A.D. 409—411, taught the freedom of the will and the denial of original sin, throughout the Eastern and Western churches. He was opposed, not so much by arguments derived from Scripture, as by syllogisms based on abstract principles. His opponents being in power and place, his doctrines were authoritatively condemned.

The master-mind and sympathetic heart of St. Augustine influenced theology, through the publication of his opinions and experience, down to the time of the Reformation, and is still felt throughout Christendom. His name is a battle-word.

" Ah ! we on earth may wrangle and dispute as to the design and significance of the death of Christ ; but in heaven, in the presence of the once crucified but exalted Son of God, all such discordant voices are hushed. A multitude whom no man can number, stand around and gaze on Him whom John beheld in vision, ' in the midst of the throne, a lamb as it had been slain ; ' and in adoring

* Quoted from Schaff's " Life of Augustine," p. 97.

wonder and grateful joy together swell the triumphant song—‘Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!’” *

May we not believe that ruins in western Asia, now spurned by the wandering Arab or stolid Turk, and in northern Africa by the contemptuous Moor, cover the remains of many who, under the influence of the truth displayed by this great master, by Basil, Cyril, the Gregories, Athanasius, and Chrysostom, learned the true way of salvation. The southern shores of the Mediterranean for several centuries received the footsteps of earnest preachers of the greatest and gladdest tidings; alas that they have been totally effaced for a thousand years, as if by the sands of Libyan deserts!

* Oswald Dyke’s “Theories of the Atonement.”

V.

FROM THE FATHERS TO THE SCHOOLMEN.

“Thus did Christ to perfect manhood
In our mortal flesh attain ;
Then of His free choice He goeth
To a death of bitter pain ;
He, the Lamb upon the altar
Of the cross, for us was slain.”

(Venantius Fortunatus, about 600.)

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE FATHERS TO THE SCHOOLMEN.

“CHRISTIANITY,” says Dr. Farrar, “spent her first three centuries in one long legalized, almost unbroken, persecution.”* We of the present day are happily far removed from an atmosphere so trying; and yet every true Christian has to be still, in spirit, and sometimes in conduct, a martyr for his principles, a witness to his fellow-men, and a missionary to the world. It is this liability and call to duty which gives to the people of God, in all ages, mutual sympathy and a family likeness.

In the course of the fourth century the great disturbing element of temporal authority was thrown into the church. It introduced confusion by modifying or extinguishing the freedom of internal convictions and principles. The question for consideration was no longer what God had said, but what man had enjoined. The difficulty of detecting and authenticating identity of Christian faith and hope amidst human laws and formularies, is henceforth added to the task of discovering

* “Witness of History to Christ,” p. 105.

their manifestations in the free expression of the individual mind. When Christianity became dogmatically formulated by men, apart from Scripture, it ceased to be invariably based on personal conviction.

The theologian by eminence of the period intervening between the Fathers of the Church and the Schoolmen, is John of Damascus, who died in the year 736. His deliverance on our subject is clear:—

“He, who assumed death for us, died, and offered Himself a sacrifice to the Father; for we had committed wrong towards Him, and it was necessary for Him to receive our ransom, and we thus be delivered from condemnation.”*

The great theological school in Ireland, which in the sixth and seventh centuries gave evangelists to Europe, was famous for its attention to the study of Holy Writ. The slender notices which we get of spiritual life during the ages so dark to us, are invariably accompanied by mention of the Scriptures in which it was rooted. Of St. Patrick, we read that he subjected all his studies to the Holy Scriptures, as Paul at Gamaliel's feet. Gildas, the earliest British writer, in the sixth century, recommends to laity as well as clergy the study of the Scriptures and their circulation. His rambling epistles are full of extracts from nearly every book of the Old and New Testament. Columba was distinguished for his devotion to the study of the Bible; as was also the case with Bede, whose last work was to

* Shedd, vol. ii. p. 252.

copy the Psalter. Isidore of Seville, about 600, certainly held and promulgated the true doctrine concerning the mission of our Lord. Indeed, as we examine closely, we find that although the outward aspect of ecclesiastical history is that of a very Babel, in which all community of speech is confounded, there was and still is a primitive language in which the relationship to a common origin is displayed by the place assigned to certain fundamental truths.

On the division of the church during the eighth and ninth centuries into the two great provinces, the geographical limits of which have been maintained until now,—the Eastern and Western churches,—the former, whilst holding to the necessity of redemption, yet grounded it on the need of a new creation; whilst the latter held it to be needful for the forgiveness of sin, and individual regeneration. The course of truth became more readily and extensively corrupted in the one by the prevalence of nominalism and rationalism; whilst, in the other, although these elements occasionally appeared, yet there was also the more frequent product of true evangelical faith.

The details of the life of Cæsarius, who became bishop of Arles in 501, reveal to us attachment to the Scriptures and to the true doctrine of Christ as the principal traits in his character. It is probable, also, that these characteristics lay at the foundation of the renown obtained by Germanus (418), Elizius (641), and other well-known names; but the real

acts of all who, during these ages, obtained an official reputation for sanctity, have been so buried beneath a mass of silly inventions, that it is now impossible to separate the wheat from the chaff.

It is only occasionally that we get proof of the prevalence of Gospel truth. It had now become an under-current.

The great architect of the ecclesiastical edifice of the mediæval church was unquestionably Gregory the Great (*ob.* 604). Against the one debt which the Church owes to this pontiff,—the musical additions to the public service,—there is a painful set-off. He was the constructor of the Roman Sacramentarian Liturgy, the completer of the substitutionary worship which shut out the Gospel, and the introducer of the Roman system, with all its errors, into England. Yet this ritualistic, energetic, and much-occupied man, holds true views concerning the method of God's forgiveness.

“Hence a man must be offered as a sacrifice for man ; so that a rational victim may be slain for a rational criminal. But how could a man himself stained with sin, be an offering for sin ? Hence a sinless man must be offered. But what man descending in the ordinary course would be free from sin ? Hence the Son of God must be born of a virgin, and become man for us. He assumed our nature without our corruption. He made Himself a sacrifice for us, and set forth for sinners His own body, a victim without sin, and able both to die by virtue of its humanity, and to cleanse the guilty upon grounds of justice.”*

* Quoted from Shedd, vol. ii., p. 263.

All parties in the visible church have concurred in the doctrine and devotion expressed by Gregory's celebrated hymn, *Veni Creator Spiritus*. The fervid prayer, which it made musical for ever, has served alike for the utterances of private worship and the song of thousands in their highest solemnities. It expresses that deep concord in the truth which we argue has ever been a feature of Christianity. This is brought out in Dryden's paraphrase:—

“Immortal honour, endless fame,
Attend the Almighty Father's name.
Let God the Son be glorified,
Who for lost man's redemption died ;
And equal adoration be,
Eternal Comforter, to Thee.”

Alcuin, though not a warm-hearted disciple of the Lord, was nevertheless a correct doctrinaire, as his commentaries, his other works, and his conduct testify.

So true it is that “men may be brought to spiritual life by the Gospel and Spirit of Christ, while, like Lazarus, they continue bound with the grave-clothes of prejudice.”*

We may surely believe that the motive which led our own King Alfred (871—901) amongst his other literary labours, to select the soliloquies of St. Augustine for his study and translation, must have been an appreciation of the doctrine of saving grace.†

The real Christian life of the period was probably

* Carson.

† See an article by Dr. Edersheim, *Sunday at Home*, May, 1874.

found in the reaction against mere dogmatics. This was manifested in the creation of a mystical party, without very defined tenets, covering all Christian thought, from bare Platonism to true Scriptural views of Christ.

The uniting sympathy between those forlorn days and our own happier times, is deep gratitude felt and expressed, in both periods alike, for the infinite blessings of redemption. Those persons, in all ages, who have had the weightiest impressions concerning the objective character of Christ's work, have ever been foremost in praise. It is this which has so often filled with sunshine the darkest lot; it is this which makes the children of God one everywhere, and at all times, in spiritual enjoyment. Over and over again, in cell or cloister or cottage or maiden's bower, has Cowper's sentiment been experienced,—

“E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.”

Claudius of Turin, of Spanish education, an active writer and preacher, and ultimately Bishop of Turin (died 840), held and promulgated Scriptural doctrines concerning the person and work of Christ; placing the latter foremost in regard to real religion, and taking a general Augustinian view of the truth. He made honest but vain endeavours to promote Scriptural studies and purity of teaching, and attracted the usual obloquy cast

on mediæval reformers—the charge of forming a new and heretical sect. He was not only in personal faith an enlightened Christian, but saw, as his writings indicate, the true bearing and issue of many of the great errors then prevalent in the Roman Catholic church. Although his efforts, and the efforts and prayers of similar enlightened individual workers from time to time, did not prevail to effect any public changes, yet they are not to be considered fruitless. In many a home and many a convent, the truth found its outlet in the sanctified affections and personal attachment which led believing souls to a knowledge of Christ as the only and sufficient Saviour.

“Yet, far as the actual system of the church, in this and other features, had diverged from apostolic usage ; largely as alloy had now been fused into the gold, and thickly as the tares were mingling with the wheat implanted by the heavenly Sower, there is ample testimony in the canons of reforming synods, and still more in the exalted lives of men like Aidan, Gregory, Eligius, Luidger, Bede, and Alcuin, or of John the Almoner, of Maximus, and others in the East, to certify that religion was not mastered by the powers of darkness, but that, on the contrary, the Spirit of her Lord and Saviour was still breathing in the Christian Church, and training men for heaven.” *

From out of the mass of mere nominal Christianity, which is spread over the mediæval period, there were occasional cries arising from some soul

* See Wright's “*Biographia Britannica Literaria*,” vol. ii. p. 394.

convinced of sin, and seeking for the peace that passeth understanding; there are even some few instances of whole communities manifesting the same urgency. But these were isolated cases, not sustained by any persistent effort for diffusion, and dying without leaving visible traces.

Mr. Hardwick says :—

“Invisible influences and agencies were at work which suddenly operate and bear fruit, without our being able to trace their path, or to have discerned their presence—like the minute pores which, all unseen, convey a life which grows we know not how, and comes we know not whence.”*

We have an example of this in Arnold, the old monk who, in the darkest times, offered up daily the prayer, “O Lord, Jesus Christ! I believe that in Thee alone I have redemption and righteousness.”

The student of ecclesiastical history will soon find himself surrounded with piles of books professedly relating to the subject, but whose interest has entirely passed away. They entomb the vain exercises of busy brains, on dissensions and disputes which had no bearing on religion, and small influence on theology. The vast amount of speculation that was not progress, the array of ideas that made no additions to the sum of human knowledge, is inconceivable, save by those whose researches have led them into the vaults of dead polemics.

The great predestination controversy which now

* “Church History, Middle Age,” Hardwick, p. 105.

arose was continued and carried on by Hincmar (806—882) against Gotteschalk. So far as it is displayed in the ponderous folio of the former (a second work of which the first is lost),* it does not furnish any details of personal subjection to evangelical truth. Gotteschalk, a monk of Soissons, was what is now improperly called a hypercalvinist, holding the double nature of predestination, viz., that predestination to death was equally the decree of God as predestination to life. For this he was persecuted by Hincmar, condemned by councils, and imprisoned until death; after which his relentless enemy denied him ecclesiastical burial. The controversy branched out into the nature and effect of the atonement made by Christ; but although it called forth the efforts of all the great ecclesiastics of that time, in the Roman Church, the literature of the contest shows no higher standard than the records of St. Augustine and the Fathers, no other scope but the declaration of what were the doctrines of the Church, and no other object but dialectic victory.†

We now encounter some difficulty in tracing the golden thread of Divine truth. The course of error is tersely given by Principal Cunningham in a few sentences, which summarize a long, painful, and tedious history:—

“The doctrine of justification, notwithstanding the

* “Le grosceur du seconde, qui forme presque un volume en folio, peut nous consoler de cette part.”—*France Pontificale*, Rheims, p. 45.

† See Prichard’s “Life and Times of Hincmar,” Parker, 1849.

peculiarly full, formal and elaborate exposition which the apostle Paul was guided by the Spirit to make of it, became very soon involved in obscurity and error; and though some, no doubt, in every age—apparently decreasing, however, in number in every succeeding century—were practically, and, in fact, led by God's grace to rest for their own salvation upon the one Foundation laid in Zion, yet it is, to say the least, somewhat doubtful whether, after the age of the men who had held personal intercourse with the apostles (from none of whom have we anything like detailed expositions of Christian doctrine), any man can be produced who has given, or who could have given, a perfectly correct exposition of the whole of Paul's doctrine upon this vitally important subject." *

In the reigns of Edward I. and II. flourished one of the earliest poets who wrote in vernacular English—Robert Mannyng, or De Brunne. In one of his tales he rebukes the bigotry of a priest, who had condemned, as without hope, a Saracen; and shows that God's revealed will was to give to every one space for repentance:—

“To leave hys synne he shal have space,
And turn againe to lyfe and grace.”

He pictures the priest seeing in a vision, our Lord on the cross, and hearing the Saviour appealing to him to have mercy as Himself had mercy.

“With pain and hard passyon,
My body I gave for his ransom,
Why wust thou he hadde helle fire,
Since I have boght hym so dear?”

* “Theology of the Reformation,” by Principal Cunningham, pp. 103-4.

Yet [again] were I redy man to buy,
Ere man withouten ende shulde die.
'Tharfore with gode devocyon,
Pray for manny's salvacyon."*

So impressed were all Christians during the 12th century with the actual or supposed necessity of seclusion from society as then constituted, in order to practise godliness, that the awakened laymen, who really loved Christ, relied on Him alone, and sought to do His will, ran into the mould of monasticism. Thus originated a number of communities—the Beghards, the Apostolicians, the Waldenses, and a host of others—who followed the fashion, but effected within their organization, not a revolt against Rome, but a simple recourse to Christ and the doctrine of the atonement. With this was combined a protest against the physical-force spirit which was the characteristic of Europe in the middle ages.

It is satisfactory to recollect, as we alight on the scanty evidences of conformity to the truth in the writings of obscure men in the dark ages, that such utterances were not isolated; they indicate far more than they express, and had a far wider theatre than their immediate stage; they accord with the spiritual experiences of the thoughtful and earnest everywhere.†

Theodulph, bishop of Orleans, was at the Court

* Turner's "History of England," vol. viii. p. 226.

† "Men, women, and children have often decided aright when doctors have disagreed, and doctors themselves have often felt aright when they have reasoned amiss."—*Dr. Park, of Andover.*

of France about 800. The first twelve verses of his hymn, "*Gloria, laus et honor, Tibi sit, Rex Christus redemptor,*" etc., have been sung in France on Palm Sunday for nearly 1000 years.

In the very darkest age we find instances of men, like Count Gerald of Aurilly (whose biography was written by Odo, abbot of Cluny, who died A.D. 943), in whom the apprehension of true Christian knowledge is testified by a marked life of Christian conduct.

"To show that it was possible, even for one who was a layman, to lead a pious life, Odo composed his biographical account of Count Gerald of Aurilly, a man distinguished above those of his own order, by his diligent and faithful study of the Scriptures, by his devotional habits, his lively sympathy in all Christian objects, his temperance, and his gentle treatment of his tenants." *

Neander places in the same category and century, Nilus, "who, at any period, might justly be esteemed a clear light of the Holy Spirit," and Raterius, bishop of Verona (died A.D. 974), a man of like faith and works. These men were not alone. We rejoice to think of them as a few preserved specimens, representative of a numerous life, buried too deeply for our recall, but awaiting the final restitution.

William of Paris avers that God, *not* man, could alone furnish an adequate satisfaction for sin; and when, through the love of God, this adequate satis-

* Neander, vol. vi. p. 233.

faction was given, the Divine mercy might, without injury to justice, bestow on man the forgiveness of sin, and deliver him from his wretchedness.

In offering to our readers such glimpses of character as we have to present here, there is a danger of monotony, and of giving a mere general impression of saintliness, rather than any portrait of the whole truth. All the other features which go to make up individual character were, of course, present; and the aspect of some of them might modify or obstruct our view of the evangelical features: but our aim is not biography. Those who, by a living faith, make the truths of salvation their own, come into sympathy with all those who have, in their lives on earth, manifested the same possession. Thus all truly religious history becomes connected with our own life and experience.

As has been said by Mrs. Charles:—

“May we not learn something from the men of these more fettered days, whose Christian life, hemmed in on all sides but one, rose with all its force towards the heavens, from which no human tyranny could shut it out?”*

It is, however, a mistake to suppose that the pall of the dark ages covers a whole realm of intellectual and spiritual death. Minute investigation of the materials left us, will show that there never was a time when men ceased to turn their attention to the great problems of life. There never was a time when the eclipse of faith was total.

* “Voice of Christian Life in Song,” p. 3.

All through the dreary ages when the Scholastic Philosophies employed, in fruitless questions, the intellects and leisure of the learned, there is to be found in their writings, hidden under a mass of rubbish, an acknowledgment of the necessity for accepting the doctrine of Christ's merit in atoning for sins, as an exhibition of the free love of God. Duns Scotus himself reckons, in a subtle way, the sufferings of Christ as standing to the credit of the believer in lieu of his deserved punishment.

Anselm and Aquinas hold forth and elaborate the doctrine that our blessed Lord made on earth an absolute and infinitely valuable satisfaction for the sins of the world. Duns Scotus invented (that distinction without a difference) the notion that the sacrifice was not sufficient *per se*, but by its acceptance by the Father. It is acknowledged on all hands, that the work of Christ derived its efficacy through the union of the Divine with the human, in the person of our adorable Lord.

In the works of the illustrious layman and scholar John Scotus Erigena, we find, amidst many indications of a Broad Church spirit, a deep reverence for the Scriptures, and profound homage to Christ. At the close of his great treatise on Nature, is an impassioned address to our Lord: "O Lord Jesus, I desire of Thee no other reward, or blessing, or joy, than that I might know Thy word, by the inspiration of Thy Spirit, free from all false interpretation."

The great work of Thomas Aquinas (1224—

1274), “the universal doctor,” “is rigorously Augustinian”;* and so was the “*Summa Theologia*” of his immediate predecessor Albut (born 1193). In the twenty-one folio volumes of Albut, and the twenty-eight folio volumes of Aquinas, amidst a mass of trifling in the attempt to reduce all knowledge to certain logical propositions, there are contained the essential Gospel truths, dear alike to ancient and modern, to the learned and the rude.

* Hardwick’s “*Church History : Middle Age*,” p. 286.

VI.

THE ELEVENTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

“ Cross, of Paradise the portal,
Where have clung the souls immortal,
Victors in this earthly strife ;
Holy Cross, the whole world's healing ;
By it is God's love revealing
Marvels of eternal life.”

(From the Latin of John Bonaventura 1274.)

CHAPTER VI.

THE ELEVENTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

AS we progress, the true character of the Church of Christ becomes manifest. It embodies a supernatural force acting through natural manifestations, the fulfilment of an eternal design displayed here in one part of its course. Whether we study its origin, as we find it revealed to us in the Scriptures, or its development, shown in the life of God in the souls of men as recorded in history, we are equally led to bow before the throne of Divine mercy and love. Our life is not rounded off, even in this world; but, like the ancient Greek tragedy, has its roots and its outcome amidst Divine and eternal things.

Dr. John Duncan, in a letter written to Dr. Edersheim soon after his conversion, gives him in six words the foundations of Christian doctrine, and the chief points in Christian experience—"God, Law, Sin, Grace, Jesus, and again Law." We are not to be deprived of this radical quality of Christianity by the charge of variation in other things. If we are successful in our present attempt to correlate the facts of evangelical doctrine with

the universally recorded experience of Christian life, we maintain that the schisms and divisions in nominal Christianity do not deprive it of its distinctive character, or afford any valid argument against it.

Anselm, born in 1034 at Aosta, received an early bias towards religion by the training of his mother Ermengard ; but this influence appeared to have been wasted on his attaining his full age after her death. An outcast from the home of his father, he fled towards Normandy; and, under the tutorship of Lanfranc, at Bec, not only made progress in human learning, but underwent a change of heart—which, after some hesitation, induced him to devote himself, at the age of twenty-seven, to the life of a monk at Bec. From this time he consecrated the powers of his great mind to the attainment and vindication of Christian truth. His own inner life is displayed in his meditations, prayers, and letters, of which we possess ample record. He was a humble, penitent believer in the Gospel, possessed with an overwhelming sense of the holiness and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and a joyful, confident faith in the effect of Christ's work. His capacious understanding was accompanied by an insatiable desire to render the revealed ways of God acceptable to men. He sought to simplify their expression, to prove their congruity with the actual condition of human nature. The great atonement wrought by our Lord was the centre of his system, and of his own personal life.

“Christ,” says Eadmer, his biographer, “was never absent from his life.” His numerous letters are dignified expostulations and entreaties in recommendation of personal trust in the Divine Saviour.

The treatise “Why God-man?” which Anselm commenced to write in England for the satisfaction of many who earnestly requested him “both by word of mouth and by letter” to give reasons of certain points of faith—viz., “What reason or necessity was there for God to have been made man, and by His death to have restored life to the world?”—affords an irrefutable proof of the essential unchangeableness of the doctrines of the Gospel; for it is nothing more than the latter put into scientific method suitable for all times. It is infinitely inferior, as an exhibition of convincing, saving truth, to the words of the Gospel itself; but, in a scientific aspect, it is of important and lasting use. Having discussed the proposition that redemption could not be effected by an angel or by man, but only by God, and the objection why God should require the blood of an innocent person before He could spare the guilty, he shows that, from the nature of sin, it would not be fitting for God to remit it, by a mere act of mercy, without payment; and then proceeds to lay down the axiom that the satisfaction, being necessary, should be in proportion to the measure of the sin, and that man is unable to offer more than obedience, and therefore has nothing meritorious. He affirms that “without a willing payment of the debt, God cannot let the sinner go

unpunished, nor can the sinner attain to blessedness even such as he had before he sinned" (Book I. chap. xix.); and he concludes (Book II. chap. vi.) that—

"The satisfaction *can be made by none save God, and ought to be made by none save man*; it is necessary that God-man should make it." "For here you see how a reasonable necessity shows us that that heavenly city is to be perfected out of men, and that this cannot be done except by the remission of their sins, which no man can have except through a man who is at the same time God Himself, and who, by His death, reconciles men, who are sinners, to God."

"Clearly, then, we have found that Christ, whom we admit to be God and man, has died for us."—Book II. chap. xv.

And in another place (Book II. chap. xviii.):—

"You showed that the restoration of the human race ought not to have been left unaccomplished; and that it could not have been accomplished unless man paid what he owed to God for his sin; and this debt was so great that although no one ought to have paid it except man, no one could except God; so that the same person should be man who also is God; and hence it was necessary that God should take manhood into oneness in His person, so that he who by nature ought to have paid and could not, might be in a person who could pay. . . . Now you have proved the life of this man to be evidently so exalted and precious that it is able to suffice to pay what is owing for the sins of the whole world, and infinitely more too."

He then goes on to show how the life of Christ

is paid to God for the sins of men, and how Christ was bound to suffer as regards His human nature, but not so as regards His Divine nature, and how (Book II. chap. xx.), by reason of the latter, the salvation of man follows from His death. The objector in the dialogue is now overcome by the display of the grace of Christ in the work of redemption, and exclaims,—

“The whole world can hear nothing more remarkable, nothing more comforting, nothing more desirable. For my part, I take such confidence from it that I cannot tell you with what joy my heart is gladdened. For it seems to me as though God can reject no man coming to Him in His name.”

The formal method of this celebrated treatise may repel students, its logical pretensions may deter the anxious inquirer, its occasional trivialities may offend the philosopher, but it sets forth weighty truths; and it expresses, as well perhaps as we can receive or comprehend it, the great mystery “God manifest in the flesh.” We may conclude with Anselm himself: “There are reasons of this fact greater and more numerous than either mine or any mortal intellect can comprehend.”

“He wrote meditations and prayers, composed at different periods of his inner life. Here he rises to the most exalted ecstasies, and is enraptured with the praises of the Almighty. There is expressed the most heartfelt melancholy, the deepest sense of his sinfulness, and of his own incapacity

of pleasing God, even in the least particular; and in so lively a manner do the holiness and justice of the Almighty appear to his soul, that, comparing therewith his own wretchedness and misery, he would seem to be engaged in a hopeless struggle with despair. And now his soul, confessing its corruption, rises full of confidence in God, being mindful that Christ is our judge, our salvation, and redemption, as through our belief in Him we have access to the Father. In many parts, his admiration of the Divine majesty, and his sense of his own nothingness, are lost in an elevation to the Almighty—joyful and full of confidence, springing from the consideration that through the Son of God we also are the sons of the Eternal.”*

The dialogue in the “*Cur Deus-Homo?*” proves that not only priests, but laymen, considered and discussed abstruse questions as to the mode of a sinner’s reconciliation with God.

It is a pathetic picture which we get, in the early part of the eleventh century, of the flourishing school of Fulbert of Chartres. In after years one of his old scholars (Adelman), writing to another (Berengarius), reminds him of the interesting conversations they used to have at eventide, while walking solitarily with their preceptor in the garden; how he spoke to them of their heavenly country; and how, sometimes unmanned by his feelings, interrupting his words with his tears, he adjured them, by those tears, to strive with all earnestness to reach that heavenly home, for the sake of this; to beware, above all things, of that

* Möhler, “*St. Anselm.*”

which might lead them from the way of truth handed down from the Fathers.*

At the funeral of Richard I. at Fontevrault, King John met Hugh, bishop of Lincoln. John produced an amulet which he wore round his neck with a chain. He seemed to think it would help him to walk straight. The bishop looked at it scornfully. "Do you trust in a senseless stone?" he said. "Trust in the living rock in heaven—the Lord Jesus Christ. Anchor your hope in Him, and He will direct you." †

In the twelfth century the antagonism to the worldliness of the Church was not manifested in any enlarged apprehension of its radical defects by reason of its departure from Scriptural simplicity, nor by any loud protest against the loss of saving doctrine, but rather in the resort to subjective religion, and in the cultivation of a sympathetic state of the heart and mind with God. This, again, was grounded not on mere pietistic tenderness, nor on the dictates of an inner light, but on the reception of the saving work of Christ as the foundation of peace. This underlays the devotion of Raymond Lulli, of Richard St. Victor, and the truly religious men of that age.

Persecution against those who left the Roman Catholic Church, though bitter and outrageous, yet in point of continuity and the number of its sufferers, must yield to the unvarying persecution

* Neander, vol. vi. p. 309.

† Froude, "Short Studies," 79.

carried on against all those who still remained within the pale of the Church, but differed from its authorities. The history of every monastic institution, the annals of every sect, show frequent instances of revolt on the part of some isolated learner, occasional announcement of the truth in the expectation of sympathy, of sad disappointment, condemnation, betrayal, discipline, and solitary grief.

We do not propose to deal with the history of persecution, but it will be impossible to avoid all reference to it; for during over a thousand years the truth is only to be discovered by the lurid light of the fires kindled for its destruction. The papal religion has deliberately and persistently avowed, and acted on the dogma, that heresy—*i.e.*, departure from the standard of Rome—is to be punished with death. Nor has this been the maxim either of ancient or of modern times exclusively, or of blood-thirsty pontiffs or bigoted monks only; it has been adopted by the most enlightened and humane men ever connected with the system. St. Augustine, who was at first inclined towards toleration, changed his views, and at the close of his life held such persecution to be necessary. St. Bernard, the mildest of the great Church Fathers, in his sixty-sixth sermon on the Canticles concludes that it is better that heretics should be punished by the temporal power, than that they should be allowed to persist in their errors. Bossuet declares that he always was of this opinion; he says:—

“This maxim is true and unquestionable among Catholics. I declare that I have, from the first, and always, been of opinion that princes by penal laws compel heretics to conform to the opinions and practices of the Catholic church; and that this doctrine should not only be considered settled in the church, but be enacted by the laws of the state as well.”

It is a relief to forsake this transient allusion to the dark side of our subject, and turn again to the path of the light.

The course of time has brought us to St. Bernard:—

“In exhibiting the order of salvation, Bernard distinguished himself in a remarkable manner from the other church teachers of his time. The experience which he had gained in the history of his own mental conflicts, and in the spiritual guidance of others, led him, doubtless, to the conviction that, amid the changing moods of subjective feelings, nothing could afford certain repose but an objective ground of trust—but confidence in Christ as Saviour, and in the grace of redemption.”*

Bernard says:—

“Happy is he alone to whom the Lord imputeth not sin. To have Him propitious to me, against whom alone I have sinned, suffices for all my righteousness. Not to impute my sins is, as it were, to blot out their existence. If my iniquity is great, my grace is much greater. When my soul is troubled at the views of her sinfulness, I look at Thy mercy and am refreshed. It is a common good, it is offered to all, and he only who rejects it is deprived of its

* Neander, vol. viii. p. 293.

benefits. Let him rejoice who feels himself a wretch deserving of perpetual damnation, for the grace of Jesus is still more than the quantity or number of all crimes. 'My punishment,' says Cain, 'is too great for me to expect pardon.' Far be the thought! The grace of God is greater than any iniquity whatever. . . . It is fit thou shouldst believe that thy sins can only be blotted out by Him against whom alone thou hast sinned, and who is exalted above all evil; but yet to this thou must add the special belief that *thine own* particular sins are forgiven through Him, and that is the witness of the Holy Ghost in thine heart; and thou must also needs have the testimony of the Holy Ghost in thine heart touching eternal life, that thou shalt through God's grace attain to the same." *

St. Bernard stands, as it were, on the confines of two worlds: he overlooks and appreciates the field of thought of the Church Fathers on the one side, and surveys with vehement distaste the rationalistic methods of the schoolmen on the other; and yet displays an evangelical fervour partaking of no school save that of Christ. His words are welcome to the devout heart; his acts of persecution are repudiated by every sensible person.

Pelagius himself appears to have held orthodox evangelical tenets concerning the person and work of Christ.†

If in all these speculations, and from the midst of all these intellectual conflicts, we hear the cry of the inner life after God in Christ Jesus, we are satisfied.

* Works, Latin ed., p. 978.

† Neander, vol. iv. p. 307.

The writers who now entered on the enticing work of systematizing divinity commenced at the right starting-point. Alexander of Hales (1245) says that Christ and His redemption are the central truths of theology; Bonaventura (1274) says that the knowledge that Christ died for us moves the heart to love and devotion in a manner wholly different to mathematical truth. Even the suspected and condemned free-lance of the dark ages, Abelard, says:—

“The amazing grace shown us by God, who gave His own Son to become man, and suffer for us, must awaken in us such love in return as to make us ready to endure all suffering for His sake.” *

Thomas Aquinas treated the sufferings of Christ as not only sufficient but superabundant for the sins of all mankind. He says:—

“Christ must take upon Himself that punishment which is the termination of all others, which virtually contains all others in itself—that is, death. But besides the deliverance of man from sin by the satisfaction furnished for him, many other things come in in addition, which make this way in which the redemption of man was accomplished especially suited to bring man to perceive how much God loves Him, and thus to call forth the love in which salvation is grounded and next to operate as an example of humility and of every virtue.”

He finds in Christ the fountain of all grace, the Divine Mediator, the Intercessor for sinners, the accepted satisfaction for sins.

* Quoted from Neander, vol. viii.

Peter Lombard, among many subtle disquisitions which look like inadequate foundations for Divine truth, yet expressly says :—

“God’s justice required an adequate punishment for all ; His mercy could not permit this : hence the adjustment that God took upon Himself the punishment for all, and bestowed the gift of salvation upon all through Himself.” *

And again :—

“We must not consider, of the reconciliation of man with God brought about by Christ, as if God then, for the first time, began to love those who before were the objects of His hatred, as an enemy is reconciled to his enemy. God did not first begin to love us when He became reconciled with us through the blood of His Son, but He loved us before the world was, and before we were.”

The Abbot Joachim, who died about A.D. 1201, was one of those whose penetration discovers existing evils, who tenderly mourn over them, and accurately describe them, but do not aggressively attack them. The basis of the profound and sad meditations of this good man is personal subjectiveness to the work of Christ, which is expressed in somewhat mystical fashion, as though the truth were too precious for the light. From the midst of the adverse circumstances of the age they looked a long way forward, beyond time : like Cardinal Peter Damian (1003-1072), they sung of the joys of heaven :—

* “Sermons,” vol. vii. part 6 ; cited by Neander, vol. viii. p. 288.

“In the Fount of life perennial the parched heart its thirst would
slake,
And the soul, in flesh imprisoned, longs her prison walls to break—
Exile, seeking, sighing, yearning, in her fatherland to wake.”*

Nor has the exclusive trust in the work of Christ, which is the characteristic of true Christianity, ever tended to foster a simply contemplative life, or led to neglect of obvious duty. The example of Raymond Palmaris is in point as to this. He was an artisan at Placenza, born in 1140, in easy circumstances, and under the influence of pious feelings gave much attention to religion.

“While he was still an artisan, and had the care of a family, he improved every hour which he could spare from the business of his trade, and also the holidays, to obtain from well-informed ecclesiastics and monks a more exact knowledge of the contents of the sacred Scriptures, and of the doctrines of religion. The knowledge thus acquired he intended to use in promoting the salvation of his fellow-men. On Sundays and festivals he collected together in a workshop the people of his own class, and particularly such as followed the same trade with himself, and whom he could persuade to forego their customary amusements at those times, and addressed them on matters of practical Christianity. These addresses met with so much favour that multitudes soon flocked together from all quarters to hear him. Many invited him to preach in the public streets, and in the market-place. But this he refused, saying that it belonged to none but priests and the learned to do this: an uneducated man like himself might by this course easily fall into mistakes. . . . Having

* Mrs. Charles : “Voice of Christian Life in Song.”

laboured in this manner for twenty-two years, he cheerfully looked forward to death. He testified that he put no trust in his own merits, but confided solely in the mercy of Christ." *

There can be no doubt, judging from the writings of his opponents, that Peter de Bruys, who, in the beginning of the twelfth century, laboured for twenty years as a preacher in the south of France, held and proclaimed the true doctrine of salvation by faith in the work of Christ alone. From the crests of the Pyrenees all down through Provence and Languedoc, he made the truth known by his piquant and powerful oratory, and was ultimately put to death by an infuriated mob, whose superstitions he had rudely derided and scorned, at St. Gilles, in Languedoc.

The existence of an actual evangelical faith in these countries is further attested by an ancient treatise on "Antichrist," dated 1120, still extant.†

In the twelfth century arose a very extensive effort for purity of life and doctrine, of the true character of which we know but very little,—that of the Cathari, or Purists. The north of Italy, Spain, the south and north-east of France, the Danubian Provinces, Germany, Burgundy, and finally a few emissaries in England, (who were left to perish as outcasts in 1159,) denote a great wave of reformation. From the imperfect intimations of their doctrines which we gather from the contumelious reproaches which followed them, we may infer that

* Neander, vol. viii. p. 6.

† "Life of St. Bernard," by Neander. English translation, Appendix, 342.

they attracted people by the hope of finding the scope of their hearts' desire in the full and free salvation wrought out by the Divine Redeemer. They repudiated transubstantiation—and this in that age was sufficient to justify the reproach of all that was ill; but from their acknowledged purity of aim and of life, from their use of the Word of God, and from their Scriptural service-book, still extant, we may safely conclude that the widely-spread sect included many who sought and found the "truth as it is in Jesus." In the library of the Academy of Arts at Lyons there has been discovered a translation of the New Testament into the Romaic dialect of the south of France, never printed, which contains in an appendix, prayers, the Pater Noster, the beginning of the Gospel of St. John, and further prayers, arranged as if for public service.

The great Dominican missionary, St. Vincent de Ferrier (1357-1410), preached Christ from Italy to Scotland, from Spain to Germany.

Bonaventura, the "seraphic doctor," who became a Franciscan in 1248, recognises and displays the glow of heart arising from an affectionate faith in the work of Christ, and the willingness—nay, gladness—springing from gratitude for so great a gift, which disposes the mind to the reception of Divine truth. With such men the supernatural is ever present, often overcoming the natural, for they are continually beholding the beatific vision of the Lamb of God.

The cry of truth is now heard, proceeding not from the professed soldiers of Jesus Christ, but from the people whom they had made their enemies. Henceforth, and for several centuries, this is to be the case. The progress of truth is to be by an under-current, often lost to sight, and appearing at the surface only when its strength becomes triumphant for the time. Dean Milman thus indicates the origin of the movement :—

“From almost every part of Latin Christendom a cry of indignation and distress is raised by the clergy against the teachers of the sects, which are withdrawing the people from their control. It is almost simultaneously heard in England, in Northern France, in Belgium, in Bretagne, in the whole diocese of Rheims, in Orleans, in Paris, in Germany, at Goslar, Cologne, Treves, Metz, and Strasburg. Throughout the whole south of France, and it would seem in Hungary, the Sectarianism is the dominant religion. Even in Italy these opinions had made alarming progress. Innocent himself calls on the cities of Verona, Bologna, Florence, Milan, Placentia, Treviso, Bergamo, Mantua, Ferrara, Faenza, to cast out these multiplying sectaries. Even within or on the very borders of the papal territory, Viterbo is the principal seat of the revolt.” *

The various languages in which this great protest was uttered united in proclaiming that this was something far more important than a revolt against the hierarchical system, which now hid Christianity from the eye. The voice was that of men seeking for the restoration of evangelical truth,

* “History of Latin Christianity,” vol. iv. p. 369.

of which they had just enough knowledge to desire more. Men had found a refuge in monachism ; but this too, like all human institutions, had become corrupted, aggrandised, and perverted to luxury. The solitary, thoughtful monk, as he embraced every form of austerity which successive reformers instituted in order to stem the tide of worldliness, and found them all futile, must have sympathized in secret with the despised heretic, who, by simple faith in Christ, had found a more excellent way. It was in vain that the dominant party enjoyed triumphs alike over theological, moral, and political reformers. The battle was apparently won by the hierarchy ; but either the hungering and thirsting after the true righteousness, the inherent aptitude and sufficiency of the simple scheme of salvation, or the glaring inconsistencies of the dominant party, occasioned a perpetually renewed rebellion. A decretal of Pope Gregory IX. against heretics ordains, amongst other things, "that no lay person was to dispute in public or in private concerning the Catholic faith."

It is clear that the awakening was of a moral and spiritual kind, and that it had its origin and found its support in the contact of the Gospel of Christ with the minds of men. The south of France was its head-quarters ; and when we try to ascertain its character by the fruits which it left there, we find, amidst the fierce and deadly storms of persecution, many proofs that the faith which was then kept until death was faith in the sole merit and

mediation of Jesus Christ, and a belief in the simplicity of the truth as it is in Him.*

The place of the Vaudois in Gospel history has some analogy with that which the Hebrews held in an earlier stage of the world. They were the witnesses for Christ, as the latter were witnesses for God, amidst almost universal degeneracy.

On the Italian side of the Cottian Alps, in the few deep, long valleys (Vaux) radiating from Mount Viso, dwelt a people numbering probably not more than 50,000, holding tenets which had become peculiar elsewhere. It is now impossible to trace their beginning. When the doctors of the Lutheran Reform had fought their battles and turned to see the spectators, they found among others this small community, and soon ascertained that they had held from time immemorial the truths which the reformers had re-discovered. They were complained of by Peter Damian, a papal legate, in the year 1050; and thenceforward councils, princes, and ecclesiastics joined the cry against them, and occasionally carried war into their valleys, intending to exterminate them. In doctrine these valley-men held firmly to the paramount authority of Scripture—disowning the pope. They were the actual conservatives of truth, for papal doctrines were in a process of constant change. Their teachers learnt by heart the New Testament and various books of the Old Testament. They were as walking copies of the Word of God—the women as well as the men.

* See notes in Gieseler, vol. iii. chap. vii.

They were missionaries also. In the twelfth century they are found as hawkers, or pilgrims; the chronicle of the Abbey of Corbie complains:—

“They are an ancient race of simple men, dwelling in the Alps, who love antiquity, and desire to supersede our religion and the creed of all the Latin churches. Their teachers learn the Bible by memory, and have a constant aversion to the rites of the church.”

The inquisitor Raynard Jaechs has left us a vivid description of these pedlars, beginning with the display of small wares, and then opening the Word of God from the stores of memory. Then followed the wandering teachers—such as Peter Bruys and Henry the Italian, the one turning to France, and the other to Italy, both preaching that faith in Christ alone saves, and that all external services and worship not flowing from this are in vain. Bruys was brought to the stake in 1130; Henry died in prison at Arles some years afterwards. Their doctrine has never perished, for it is the doctrine of the Gospel; and if it was then occasionally mingled with strong belief in diabolical possession, and in some other matters was at variance with the creed of the Reformation, yet its ruling principle of redemption by the work and love of Christ has overcome and outlived all foreign admixtures. As early as the thirteenth century the Waldenses had spread into Germany. Numbers of them were to be found in Switzerland, on the Rhine, in Swabia, Thuringia, and Bavaria. They formed themselves

into societies, which corresponded with each other, and thus endeavoured to propagate their tenets. They were particularly numerous in the district of the Upper Rhine, in and around Strasburg, where they were called the "friends of God" and "Werekelers" (workers), and they may also be traced in other places, such as Mayence and Augsburg. Detected, persecuted, and slain, they yet kept their ground until late in the fifteenth century.*

Waldo, a merchant of Lyons, paid a poor scholar to translate the Gospels and some other books of Scripture. Two of his men journeyed to Rome, and presented their translations to the pope. They applied for permission to preach. It was scornfully refused. All their humble approaches were repelled with derision. The Council of Verona was held, and they were declared to be heretics. This was in 1184. In doctrine they were Anti-ritualists; in life humble and holy; in citizenship exemplary. Their power lay in the Scriptures, which they studied, used, preached, and spread.

"The great strength of the followers of Peter Waldo was, no doubt, their possession of the Scriptures in their own language. They read the Gospels, they preached, and they prayed in the vulgar tongue. They rejected the mystical sense of Scripture."†

The Vaudois contended, in the language of their own ancient standard, "for their living hope in God

* Ullman, vol. i. p. 334.

† "History of Latin Christianity," vol. iv. p. 185.

the Christ, for regeneration and inward renewal by faith, hope, and charity, for the merits of Christ, and the all-sufficiency of His grace and righteousness." Everywhere the testimony is similar :—

"In examining the sources of the popularity of Berthold, the Bavarian Franciscan preacher of the first part of the thirteenth century, it is impossible not to see him, besides the fearless rebuker of prevalent sin, the preacher of Christian righteousness. Such reputation did he gain, that no church was large enough to hold the multitudes flocking to hear him ; he often preached in the open fields, with more than 60,000 people assembled around him." *

A movement for the translation and promulgation of the Scriptures now took place, first in Provence and thence into Alsace. This led to the formation of lay associations for Bible reading, which were afterwards suppressed by authority.

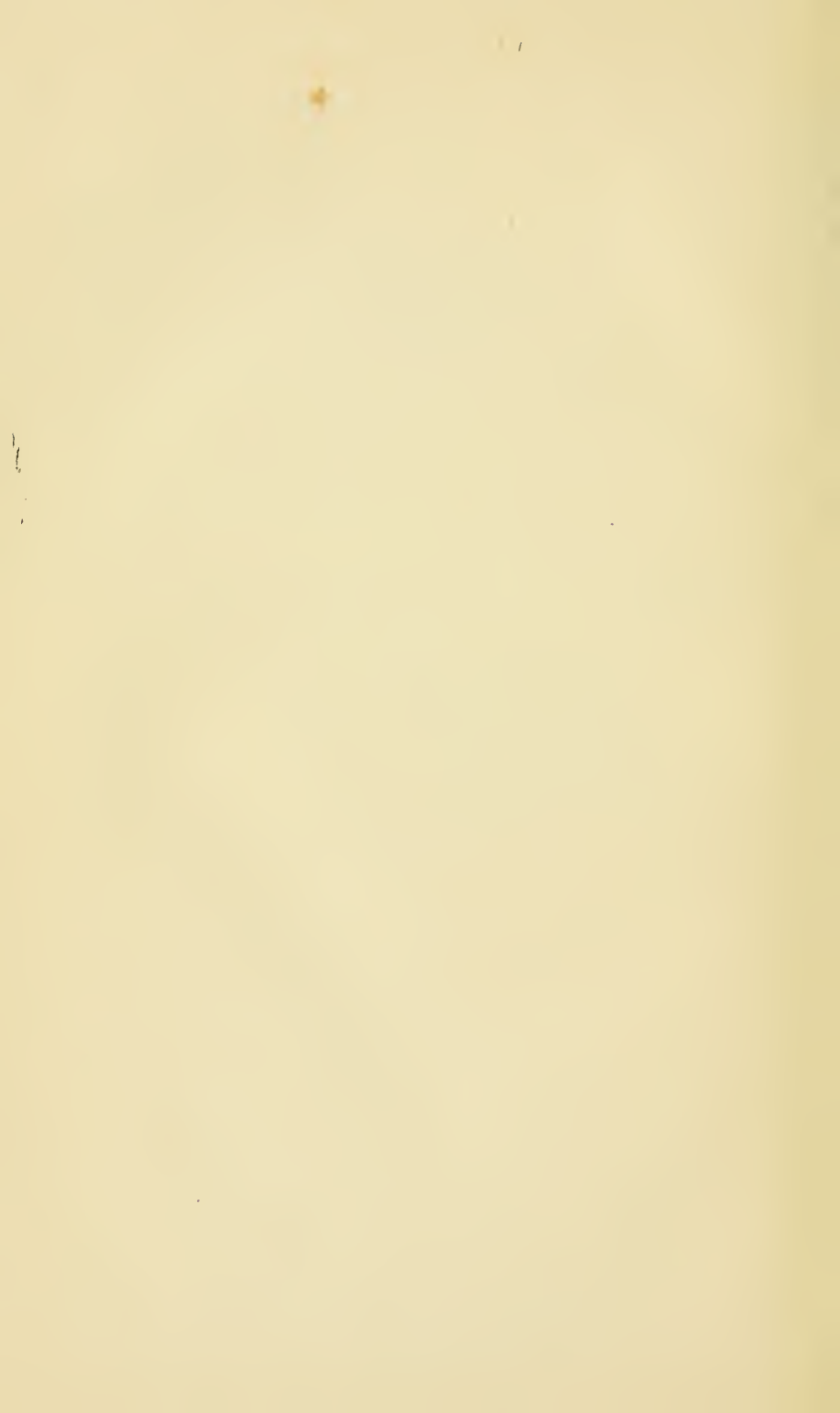
* Neander, vol. viii. p. 35.

VII.

THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES.

“Here finds my heart its rest,—
 Repose that knows no shock ;
The strength of love that keeps it blest
 In Thee, the riven Rock.
My soul as girt around,
Her citadel hath found ;
I would love Thee as Thou lov’st me,
 O Jesus most desired !”

(From a Latin poem, date and authorship unknown.)



CHAPTER VII.

THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES.

SUCH is the force of sympathy in spiritual things, that the example of a good man becomes an awakener and educator of others. In religious history, too, the examples are often those of men who have risked life itself in the pursuit of their convictions. This gives to the narrative its powerful interest. It is a study of the contact of truth with human nature, under pressure inducing a kind of metamorphism in the latter.

It is impossible now to say with accuracy how much of evangelical truth was manifested by the numerous and persistent dissenters who, from the tenth century downwards, appeared throughout Europe. The opposition which they everywhere encountered led to wide-spread dissatisfaction with the existing state of things; but the success of the defenders usually swept the assailants from the scene, and destroyed or perverted the records of their tenets. If we try to drag into the daylight of history the so-called heresies and fanaticisms which appeared in the south of France in 1104, spread in the Netherlands in 1115, in Brittany in 1148, on the Rhine in 1115, in Italy, Germany,

and England in 1159, we find but little positive proof of their having always included the distinctive tenets of the Gospel. It is difficult to believe that anything else lay at the bottom of this remarkable movement, for it was clearly not political; and though it everywhere struck at the hierarchy, yet this was done solely on the ground that the latter opposed the Scriptures.

The rise of the fraternities for prayer,—that of men “Beghards,” and that of women “Beguines,”—which occurred so extensively in the Netherlands at the end of the twelfth century, is an affecting case of men “feeling after God if haply they might find Him”; a struggle of the instincts of Christian life under the burden of mediæval superstition.

The great controversies that arose within the Church in the thirteenth century, and continued down to the eve of the Reformation,—controversies which rent the whole of nominal Christendom into rival and hostile parties, and filled the ecclesiastical world with ponderous treatises and subtle metaphysics,—do not displace our argument. Abelard and his pupil Berengarius represented the Broad Church men of the age, in some of their opinions diverging far towards rationalism. Amidst all the strife, the combatants professed and held the true doctrine of atonement. Christ was with all parties the only ground of salvation. The records we possess of the inner lives of the doughty champions on either side show that their own

personal reliance was on the love and work of the Redeemer. We may well apply to them a remark of the Bishop of Derry:—

“A man's faith does not consist of the many things which he affects to believe, but of the few things which he really believes, and with which he stands fronting his own soul and eternity.”

Savonarola, at Florence, in 1293, displayed the vigorous effort of a determined and highly individual man, fleeing from the sinful frivolities of worldly life to the enjoyments and learning of the cloister, and then in large study of Scripture finding light, and striking out for it and with it. His writings and his career open to us his whole spiritual history. At first he lacked the peace which flows from a clear discernment and firm grip of justification by faith; but he afterwards rejoiced in his hold of the efficiency of Christ's atoning work. In his “Meditations on the Fifty-third Psalm,” the work of his last few days of imprisonment before martyrdom, he says:—

“Here am I, a great sinner, to whom Thou hast pardoned many sins, washing them out by the blood of Thy Christ, and covering them by His passion.”

And the following is his meditation on the thirty-ninth Psalm:—

“Take away, Lord, my sins, and I am freed from all trouble. Yes, set me free, not according to my righteousness, but according to Thy mercy! For I seek Thy com-

passion, I do not offer my righteousness. But if Thy mercy has made me righteous I have also Thy righteousness."

And as he administered the sacrament to his two fellow-sufferers and himself in the cell, he prayed aloud:—

"Thou hast raised Thyself upon the tree of the cross to shed Thy holy blood for our sins and our misery. To Thee I pray, my Lord—to Thee I pray, my Comforter—that Thy sacred blood may not be shed in vain for me."

On the scaffold, a priest, of the name of Nerotto, asked him if he met death with composure: he replied, "Should I not willingly die for His sake who willingly died for me, a sinful man?"

The thirteenth century produces one of the exceptional characters in history—a man who, by four centuries at least, anticipated his age, and who by his persistent individualism and noble enthusiasm set an example to all future ages. Such a man was Raymond Lulli, a native of Majorca, educated amidst the airy gaities of Provence—a poet after the fashion of the times, but suddenly brought under the influence of the call and claim of Christ. He at once felt that the proper utterance of his nature henceforth should be, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits conferred upon me?" and decided, first, that the leading want of the age was that of missionary zeal; and, secondly, that the true exercise for this was not in the cru-

sades then being waged, but in the proclamation of the merits of Christ.

The life, as well as the writings and opinions, of Raymond Lulli,* are equally extraordinary as standing out from the level of his fellows. The principle on which all his views are based is the cordial acceptance by faith of the justifying work of Christ, and a resulting grateful dedication to Him and His service; and a practical inference of the duty (as part of obedience) of making known to the heathen the great salvation, with the conviction that this could be done by spiritual methods only. These were the living principles which induced his lifelong dedication to the pursuit and advocacy of missionary work. This led to the grand and fascinating conception of his "Ars Generale," an attempt to connect and subjugate all human thought and human philosophy and knowledge, into and unto the doctrine of Christ crucified. This led to his flinging his life away in extreme age, not in battle " 'gainst the Turk," but in the proclamation of the truths of Christ's redemption in the high places of Mohammedanism, where he found the death he longed for, in the height and heat of loving, active effort for his Saviour.

In his ample treatise on Miracles, with great depth of thought, he considers a well-grounded belief in the supernatural as the true characteristic of the Christian ages as compared with those of Paganism; the latter leaning towards the deifica-

* Born 1234.

tion of nature—Pantheism; whereas the glorious distinction of Christianity is God revealed.

The bent of his heart is constantly coming out in his writings. In his "Contemplations" he says, concerning pilgrimages:—

"The mode of the way to find Thee stands within the power of many; for to remember Thee, to love Thee, to honour and serve Thee, to think of Thine exalted dignity, and of our own great wants—this is the occasion and the way to find Thee if we seek Thee. Often have I sought Thee on the cross, and my bodily eyes have not been able to find Thee, although they have found Thine image there, and a representation of Thy death. And when I could not find Thee with my bodily eyes, I have sought Thee with the eye of my soul; and thinking on Thee, my soul found Thee, my heart began immediately to warm with the glow of love, my eyes to weep, and my mouth to praise Thee."

Durando, a Dominican teacher of theology at Paris, and afterwards Bishop of Meaux (died 1333), was in many respects a precursor of Protestant teachers. He formally investigated the essence of theology, and found the central point to be God as Redeemer. This, he affirmed, contains, by necessary implication, all other necessary and fundamental doctrines.*

From the ninth to the fifteenth century—500 years—the numerous sects which sprang up and spread with rapidity, but successively failed to become permanent, showed the avidity of the search

* See Neander, "History of Dogma," vol. ii. p. 605.

after buried truth, and the deep impression in favour of a return to the Scriptures, which they all professed to honour. With the solitary exception of the followers of Peter Waldo (1170), who began circulating the Gospel in the vernacular, they had no continuous existence or visible effect.

Among the multitude of dissenting sects which came into the foreground of ecclesiastical history in the fourteenth century, there were several whose principles show not only revolt against Rome in regard to its corruptions, but against its anti-scriptural errors. In the religious orders—particularly in that of the Franciscans—attempts at reformation led to schism, the latter manifesting the existence and developing the growth of a spiritual community. Such was the origin of the Fratricelli; in a similar manner arose the brethren of the “Free Spirit,” and various other communities. In some places secretly, and in others openly, these sects had their assemblies and enjoyed their fellowship. They were called conventicle-men, praying-men, singing-men, and other names, under which lay, in many cases, true evangelical faith and practice, as we learn from the passionate denunciations of their persecutors. They spread throughout the Romanized world, but are to be tracked, sad to relate, principally by the fires of their martyrdom, or the tales of their compulsory re-conversion to the tenets of the Church and the authority of the Pope. The Inquisition is their grim historian.

There are two distinct powers ordinarily at work in the world, on the golden truths of the Gospel. The one, the instinct of the common people, which, every now and then, has somehow laid hold on the doctrines of salvation and given them sudden acceptance and swift expansion, until in mediæval times they were trodden out by the ruthless heel of ecclesiastical tyranny; the other, the profound convictions of quiet scholars, who have made the great discovery only to find that the world had no place for the truth.

Ere we come to the close of Scholasticism, we may note that the writings of Eckhart, by showing the way to the truth rather than to the Church, and discriminating between revelation and reason, cleared the way for Luther. Gerson, seeking to reconcile Scholastic Philosophy with Gospel truth, tells his disciples that the latter could only be learnt through revelation; that the command, "Repent, and believe the Gospel," is a surer guide than Plato or Aristotle.

The history of the Church, pursued in this line of investigation, is incomparably more delightful to a pious mind than either the ordinary narrative of its external fortunes, or that of its internal structure and doctrinal conflicts.

Of the reformers before the Reformation, D'Aubigné well observes :—

"God, who was then preparing His work, raised up, during a long course of ages, a succession of witnesses to His truth. But the generous men who bore testimony to

this truth, did not clearly comprehend it, or at least did not know how to bring it distinctly forward.”*

Thomas Bradwarden, scholar of Merton College, Oxford (died 1349), the chaplain of Edward III., was a profound writer on the controversy concerning the freedom of the will, and in the course of his life and works displayed a full appreciation and cordial acceptance of evangelical tenets. In his great treatise—a folio of nearly 900 pages—he displays a mind wholly pervaded by the love of God in Christ Jesus, and fully reliant on the Gospel provision of salvation.

In 1378 began the schism in the papacy which for thirty-eight years divided and distracted western Christendom. Of the two rival claimants for the popedom, Dean Milman writes:—

“Neither of these popes were men whom religious enthusiasm could raise into an idol; they were men, rather, from whom profound devotional feeling could not but turn away abashed and confused.”

The same writer says of the schism at its close:—

“Christendom had beheld with indignation this miserable game of chicanery, stratagem, falsehood, feigning, played by two old men, each above seventy years old.”

A line of evangelical opinions and practice may be traced in Bohemia from very early times. Half a century before Huss, there were eminent men at Prague who protested against the corruptions of

* Vol. i. p. 73.

the Church, and did so on the ground of their inconsistency with the simple Gospel of Christ. Such men were Conrad of Waldhausen, who preached Christ in German, in the square in front of the church of St. Gall, in 1363, to crowds greater than could assemble in the building; and another monk in Moravia, a canon of St. Vitus in Prague, who devoted himself to preaching in the Bohemian language. Immediately after him, and in labours more abundant and important, arose Matthias, also a canon of St. Vitus, who continued, though under the ban of the Church, to adhere to its government, whilst by his writings and in his preaching he exhibited "the truth as it is in Jesus." Matthias thus writes of Christ as the only Mediator:—

"If thou pourest out thy soul to any one in warm feeling and words, as if wishing to find the crucified Jesus, thou wilt depart from him embittered in mind, finding in thyself that thou hast there lost the grace of Jesus Christ, and thy toil and fine words as well. Thus neither wilt thou venture, openly and solemnly, to confess Christ crucified, because then thou wilt, without scruple, be treated as a heretic, and wilt not depart unreviled or unspat upon; and then, by experience, thou wilt feel this exceeding great tribulation and most bitter bitterness of all faithful bodies, consciences, and souls in Jesus."

In his long-lost work "*De Regalis*," he thus repudiates tradition:—

"The Lord Jesus did not give any written law to His followers, although He might have done this in His life-

time in many ways, but merely placed His own good Spirit, and the Spirit of His Father, in the hearts of believers for a living and perfect law, and a generally sufficient rule of life, according to what has been proved above, and according to the Scriptures and prophets. Wherefore, also, His apostles, desiring not to burthen the people believing in Jesus with various doctrines, inventions, and precepts, wrote few things, commanded still fewer, and confirmed unshakably by statutes fewest of all. It is manifest, in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, how the beloved Fathers and Apostles of Christ desired their fellow-Christians to be free, and not tied to a multitude of precepts. Whence it appears that those later persons have acted, and still act, cruelly and coarsely, who have introduced and authoritatively confirmed their numerous inventions, various doctrines, and rigid commands in the family of God and the Lord Jesus, binding and burthening their subjects overmuch, so that there is such a multiplicity and so infinite a multitude of such doctrines and inventions and commandments of men, that, as was said a little before, they have filled many books, and those very large and costly ones, which no one hardly but a rich man could procure, nor even if he devoted himself to them throughout the whole of his life could he sufficiently read and beneficially digest them."

As we thus light on some Christian community in which evangelical light shone brightly for a time, we have the feeling of momentary relief, in the hope of being able to track the illumination down by the history of the institution thus formed or fed; but no such example is afforded us. When spiritual life is awakened in man, spiritual association follows, not of necessity, but of natural desire for

sympathy and extension. The association has been often attempted to be pursued in channels already made by the world—which has been the fertile cause of disturbances. All institutions, save perhaps the simple organization of successive congregations of faithful men, appear to have been untrustworthy, in regard to the perpetuation of Gospel light and life.

In a similar way the non-success of the Church in formulating a symbol of belief securing universal acceptance, raises a doubt whether, in the nature of things, such an attempt is possible. It has, however, been usually regarded as a prime necessity; learning and passion have been exhausted in the endeavour and defence. But the formula of one age is rudely revised by another. If religion had been made dependent on the stability of human creeds, it must have failed. The Divine expedient of placing in the Scriptures all that is necessary to salvation, expressed in the speech and letters of actual men, enables each person to examine and appropriate essential truth, in a manner congenial to himself. There is, however, in the centre, a core from which it all springs. The way in which the profound mystery is summed up in the saying of a poor negress, is, after all, that which most completely describes the motive power of the Atonement on mankind: “Me die, or He die; He die, or me die.” This nearly coincides with the terse definition of the late Bishop Pattison: “There are two Greek prepositions which contain

the gist of the whole matter,—(huper) *in behalf of*, and (anti) *instead of, in the place of.*" *

Of the necessity for it, we may say with Paleario, "But that enterprise was so great that all the force of the whole world knit together was not able to go through with it." †

"The doctrine itself (of vicarious satisfaction) cannot be said to be the discovery of any one age. Having a Biblical origin, and finding all its data and grounds in the revealed Word, we trace its onward flow from this fountain through the centuries; sometimes visible in a broad and gleaming current, and sometimes running, like a subterranean river, silent and unseen in the hearts and minds of a smaller number, chosen by Providence to keep alive the apostolic faith, and to preserve unbroken the line of the invisible and true Church, even though the external continuity were interrupted and broken. Men like Anselm and Wessel prepare us for men like Luther and Calvin." ‡

In a little treatise of the early German reformer Otho Vermellerius, translated by Overdale and dedicated by him to the Protector Somerset, the writer says:—

"Now hath Christ ransomed and made full satisfaction for all the sins that we have committed. He hath redeemed paid, discharged, and made harmless unto us all our misdeeds with His bitter death, victories, and resurrection, and hath satisfied His Father's righteousness, as St. Paul doth testify very comfortably, saying, 'Jesus is become and made unto us our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption.'"

* "Life," vol. i. p. 228.

† "The Benefits of Christ's Death," chap. iii.

‡ Shedd, vol. ii. p. 337.

To all such persons, in the language of Calvin, "the knowledge of Christ is honey to the mouth, melody in the ear, and joyfulness in the heart."*

* "Instit.," lib. ii. c. 16.

VIII.

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

“Jesu, crowned with thorns for me,
Scourged for my transgression !
Witnessing, through agony,
That Thy good confession ;
Jesu, clad in purple raiment,
For my evils making payment ;
Let not all Thy woe and pain,
Let not Calvary be in vain !”

(Theocritus of the Studium, 890.)

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

BY one of those remarkable collocations which distinguish God's government, we find sundry preparations now being made beforehand, destined to be available for the art of printing, about to be introduced. Religious compositions in the vernacular began to appear, though they were as yet only of use for reading by the clerics. Among these were two rhymed harmonies of the Gospels, one in the old Saxon, the other in the Frankish dialect, maintaining a spiritual tone.*

A monk named Arnoldi offered up every day in his peaceful cell this fervent prayer: "O Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that in Thee alone I have redemption and righteousness."

A pious monk of Bâle, Christopher de Utenheim, had his name written upon a picture painted on glass, which is still at Bâle, and round it this motto, which he wished to have always before him—"My hope is in the cross of Christ; I seek grace and not works."

A poor Carthusian, Brother Martin, wrote this affecting confession:—

* See Gieseler, vol. ii. p. 266.

“O most merciful God, I know that I can only be saved, and satisfy Thy righteousness, by the merit, the innocent suffering and death of Thy well-beloved Son. Holy Jesus, my salvation is in Thy hands. Thou canst not withdraw the hands of Thy love from me, for they have created and formed and redeemed me. Thou hast inscribed my name with a pen of iron, in rich mercy, and so as nothing can efface it, on Thy side, Thy hands, and Thy feet.”

After this the good Carthusian placed his confession in a wooden box, and enclosed the box in a hole he had made in the wall of his cell. The piety of Brother Martin would never have been known, if his box had not been found, on the 21st of December 1776, in taking down an old building which had been part of the Carthusian convent at Bâle. How many convents may have concealed similar treasures ! *

Wycliff's doctrine on the nature of the Gospel, as published in his lectures, sermons, and treatises, does not differ from that of Augustine, Anselm, and the Schoolmen. His distinction lies in his repudiation of the papal system and of ritualism, and his hatred of the friars. In his writings, especially the “*Trialogues*,” completed shortly before his death, will be found outlines of the tenets of puritanism which became developed 150 years afterwards, and an anticipation of the abolition of the Romanist orders and confiscation of their property. In his sermons at Lutterworth he often brings the

* D'Aubigné's “*History of the Reformation*,” vol. i. pp. 78, 79.

plain truth of Christ's atonement before his hearers in a homely way.

The desire for religious seclusion and advancement which had first led to the establishment of monasteries and religious fraternities, could not be satisfied by these in the worldly condition into which they had now lapsed. Hence arose another set of institutions, in the very heart of German church-life, connected with "freer spiritual life, and a practical development of active godliness." The Beguines, Beghards, and Lollards, all were at first voluntary associations for the practice of good works. These fraternities comprised many devout persons who, by study of the Word of God, had attained to the enjoyment of the true life; but their contemplations and their efforts seem to have had no effect beyond individual happiness and duty. It was otherwise with the institution of the "Brethren of the Common Lot," although this, too, sprang from a monastic reaction, and from an attempt to realize the ideal of monastic life beyond the pale of the existing corrupt institutions, yet it had a completer organization and a more definite form than the preceding confraternities. The entire religious revival attempted in the fifteenth century, had quite a different origin and scope from the truly great Reformation of the sixteenth. It sought out only the much-needed reformation of the religious orders, which had all become worldly and corrupt, even down to that of the Mendicants. Thus arose the reformed fraternities. The rules of the "Brethren of

the Common Lot " were, on appeal, approved by the Council of Constance, and thenceforward the institution spread throughout the Netherlands and North Germany.

With regard to the continuity of doctrine, we ascertain the extremely interesting fact that John Tauler, who, for twenty years before his death, preached the Gospel to his fellow-countrymen with unwearied assiduity and great force, was indebted to Nicholas Basle, the Waldensian, for his own views of personal Christianity.

The Mystics were speedily divided into a church party and a heretical party. The latter may be termed pantheistic, and we need not follow its fortunes. The former was represented in Germany by Eckart, about 1329, and continued to have a following down to the days of Wessel, who died in 1489. In his hands Mysticism became a truly and exclusively evangelical doctrine. It spread in France, Spain, Italy, Bohemia, and throughout the Papal world.

The Mystics kept aloof from practical reform, but so did they equally from the jangle and jargon of the theological schools, which had stifled all true divinity. To rescue the Gospel from the vain subtleties of the latter was indeed the mission of Mysticism, and it was fulfilled. It failed, however, either effectually to proclaim the work of Christ as the true doctrinal basis of belief, or to follow out into social life the lessons which the Scriptures taught.

The evidence afforded by the well-known work "De Imitatione Christi," speaks volumes in favour of the extent and common unity of evangelical feeling amidst the darkness of Romanism. It was originally published in the year 1415, without any author's name. There appears no reason to doubt that it was written by Thomas Hermesken, of Kempis (Thomas à Kempis), a disciple of the "Brethren of the Common Lot," a canon in the monastery of Mount St. Agnes, at Zwolle. Its early and immense popularity may be ascribed entirely to the Scriptural truth which it served to display and circulate, feeble in some respects though this exhibition was. The writer dwells almost exclusively on the subjective influence of the example of our Lord, and holds Him up before the believer's eye principally as a model for self-denial and holiness; yet it is clear that all this is impliedly based upon the work of Christ, as first rescuing us from the condemnation of sin. The true nature of this celebrated treatise may be gathered from the following extract :—

"In the cross is life, in the cross is health, in the cross is protection from every enemy; from the cross are derived heavenly meekness, true fortitude, the joys of the Spirit, the conquest of self, the perfection of holiness! There is no foundation for the hope of the Divine life but in the cross. Take up thy cross, therefore, and follow Christ in the path that leads to everlasting peace. He hath gone before thee, *bearing that cross upon which He died for thee*, that thou mightest follow, patiently bearing thy own cross, and upon that die to thyself for Him."

The way in which these writers led many souls into the faith and peace of the Gospel may be illustrated by a story left us concerning Sagarus, a member of Charles V.'s Council of the Netherlands, who went with his aged father on a pilgrimage of affection to Wessel's monastery. The good old man "carried in his bosom Wessel's book on the Causes of the Incarnation, which was quite worn with use, solemnly averring that he had learned from it to know Christ." *

One of the brightest names in the evangelical roll of the fifteenth century is that of John Wessel (1419-1487). He was educated in the neighbourhood of Zwolle, where Thomas à Kempis dwelt. Both had enrolled themselves among the "Brethren of the Common Lot"; and Wessel gladly availed himself of the opportunity of intercourse with the aged Thomas, who, though much more inclined to asceticism than his young pupil, yet agreed with him in the fundamentals of faith in the work of Christ alone. Thomas was destined to be a bearer of peace and love to the souls of God's children; Wessel was qualified to convey light to the inquirer and recovery to the wanderer as well. During a long life of usefulness he laboured hard to correct doctrinal error, and promote the love of Christ and the practice of piety. Ullman says of him:—

"He clove with his whole soul to Scripture. He looked upon and dealt with it as the true, vital, and only reliable

* Ullman, vol. ii. p. 578.

fountain of Christian faith. In the Scriptures he did not seek dead articles of faith for the understanding, but a living Christ for the whole of his inner man. To Christ, as a Redeemer, he clung with entire affection and absolute trust; and, on this very account, decidedly rejected everything else on which it is possible for man to lean—all personal worthiness in the sight of God, and all desert accruing from good works and ecclesiastical penances.”*

Wessel, in his work on “The Magnitude of the Sufferings of Christ,” and in other of his writings, adopts, supports from Scripture, and defends, the views usually reputed evangelical in the modern reformed churches, styled Augustinian in the mediæval church, and Pauline in the primitive church. His biographer, Ullman, thus abstracts them from his writings:—

“The law can never perfectly justify or save us; because we do not fulfil it—nay, are not even able to fulfil it, in respect that it requires what is impossible. All it does, therefore, is to excite a desire which the Gospel afterwards satisfies. By Christ, His life, sufferings, and death, we are justified before God (*i.e.*, we obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal blessedness). Of this blessedness the supreme and ultimate cause is seated in God, but the proximate and efficient in the work of Christ. In His whole manifestation as the God-man there dwelt an inexhaustible and incessantly active power, to redeem, sanctify, and save.”

Wessel’s own words are:—

“We are all the paupers of One who is rich, restored by His merit, and reconciled by His obedience; and He is One who holds His place, not by merit, but by hereditary

* “Reformers before Reformation,” vol. ii. p. 314.

right. The recompense of His pains and services, however, He has transferred to us, so that we are redeemed and accepted citizens, under an hereditary King, who is the sole master and bestower of the kingdom and its dignities."

And upon another subject, the love of Christ, he says:—

"It is impossible frequently to revolve in the mind what thy Lord, thy God, thy Saviour hath done and suffered from love to thee, and not to love Him in return."

This love, too, he held could only arise in the heart by Divine agency. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. We know that the teaching and example of John Wessel was extremely powerful in the Netherlands, and we gladly ascertain, from contemporary chronicles, that he was not alone in his convictions, but that they were shared by a number of pious, devoted clergymen, professors, monks and nuns, gentlemen and ladies, who enjoyed the true life and love of God in Christ in their souls, and looked onward to better and purer times, to which they believed things were tending. Wessel's familiar friend, the keeper of the Brethren House, in which he lived, embraced his master's views, and lived to a good old age, to inculcate Bible learning, and, next to the Bible, the study of the works of Augustine, to share in the friendship of Melancthon, and to hail the Lutheran Reformation.

John of Goch, superior of the Priory of Thabor, which he founded for nuns at Mechlin in 1457,

maintained in all their fulness the true doctrines of the Gospel, whilst in strict communion with the Romish Church. At Mechlin there were not only an unusual number of ecclesiastical and monastic institutions, but several associations of pious workers for benevolent purposes. Amongst these he wrote and lived in a manner truly evangelical. He laboured quietly in the bosom of the Church, died in the enjoyment of public esteem, and received honourable interment in the chapel of the priory of which he had so long been chief.*

“He strenuously maintains that we are justified by virtue of Christ’s merit, through faith, and not by any deserts of our own. He says that sin still cleaves to good men, but that it is forgiven for the sake of Christ. He unflinchingly follows the footsteps of Paul in preaching the merits of Christ.” †

That this eulogy is not too strong, an extract from Goch’s treatise will show :—

“Merit can be earned only by a party who is absolutely free, and in other respects not bound and obliged. But this can be said of no member of the human race, except that One, who is man indeed, but in such a way as to be also, by nature, God. This sole Man among mortals has offered Himself in sacrifice for us, and through Him God, who was in Him, has reconciled the world unto Himself. Hence it is not the merit of our works which makes us heirs of the kingdom of heaven, but the being spiritually born of God; and that Christ has merited for us by His death. The grace of Christ, from whose fulness we all

* Ullman, “Life of Goch,” vol. i.

† *Ib.* p. 144.

receive, is the sole cause of all our merits. *The mode of our salvation*, however, is described by the apostle in Romans v., where he says that 'as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' The sin of Adam was communicated to his posterity by propagation and imitation, and so likewise is the merit of Christ. The propagation of the holy will of Christ by means of the spiritual birth from God corresponds with the propagation of the inclination to sin by means of bodily birth; and the imitation of the first transgression by all the descendants of Adam finds its counterpart in the imitation of the infinite love of Christ by the elect. In forming to ourselves a conception of the redemption instituted by Christ, we must not imagine that there had existed any such enmity between God and man as sometimes exists between two hostile individuals, for whose reconciliation it is necessary that, on both sides, friendship should be restored. No: the antithesis is that between righteousness and sin. Hence there is hatred only on the side of sin, and the moment sin is taken away enmity also ceases. Christ accordingly has reconciled us to God, not as foe is reconciled to foe. The method rather is, that our sin, through which we manifested hostility to God, being abolished by Christ's death, we now begin to love Him; whereas He never withdrew His love from us, but loved us from the foundation of the world, and even while we were His enemies. In this sense God demonstrates His love to us by the death of His Son, that we, receiving such a pledge of His love, should, on our part, also be stirred up to love Him. In this way the merit of Christ is transferred to us by the appropriation and imitation of His love. We are set free from sin and the devil, and accepted as sons of God."*

* Ullman, vol. i. pp. 77, 78.

John of Goch, by his writings and his conversation, exercised considerable influence. It is evident that his Scriptural teaching found a sympathising circle and bore extensive fruit. We can trace indications of this in the transactions of subsequent years.

John of Wessel was preaching at Mayence about 1460. He took his stand on the Word of God, and discarded all legal and formal interpretations, so common in his time; he penetrated to the core of the Gospel, and seized and exhibited the work and grace of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, the faith that worked by love. "Whosoever teaches that Christ has been made unto us for righteousness, the same is a teacher whom the Lord hath sent." * It is by the grace of God alone that all are saved who are saved at all."

Truly we may now say with Luther :—

"Yes, winter's past, and summer sweet
Stands waiting to come in ;
The flowers awake, God will complete,
Who did the work begin."

The "Brethren of the Common Lot" occupied the pietistic ground of the Church for nearly two centuries; their flourishing period was the fifteenth century. They declined and died out in the latter half of the sixteenth before the great light of the Reformation. As we have seen, there were amongst them men of true evangelical faith and knowledge;

* Ullman, vol. i. p. 291.

they promoted education, and multiplied good books, first by copying, and afterwards by the press, and were abundant in good works. Ullman beautifully says of them :—

“If here, at the close, we take a retrospect of the subject, the communities of Gerhard, as a whole, present a phenomenon with a multitude of aspects. Like all human things truly excellent and great, the institute has its roots struck deeply into the past, while, at the same time, it looks prophetically into the future. Resting on the foundation of apostolical antiquity, it is a peak gilded with the first morning rays in the dawn which precedes the Reformation. If we look back into history, it reminds us, by multifarious but still unmistakable *traits of relationship*, of the societies of the Pythagoreans and Essenes, of the mother-church at Jerusalem, and of the nobler sort of monastic life, but especially of the spirit of the earlier Benedictines, and their industry in diffusing the study of letters. If, however, we look forward, the endeavours and institutions of the society remind us of the pietists and the Moravian Brethren; of the exertions made at the period of the Reformation, and in more recent times, for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures; of the labours of various associations for improving the education of the young, and the Christian training of the people; nay, even of modern societies for purposes of practical philanthropy.”*

Mysticism lay rather in emotion than in dogma. That which unites all the better class of Mystics, in all ages and in all countries, is the idea of self-dedication to God. Not in life, but in thought.

* Ullman, vol. ii. pp. 177, 178.

Fénélon exclaims, "O God! there is no other than Thou. I am nothing. What behold I in all nature? God! God everywhere,—still God only!" Of course, this pervading conviction can coexist with much that is incongruous in belief and action. The instincts of the lowest forms of life enable them to cast off all foreign inappropriate matters; but man's conviction is too weak to perform any analogous operation.

The development of Christian doctrine has in one age led to the exaltation of order and ritual, in another to the indulgence of mystical affections, in another to the patronage of logical forms,—each professing, in turn, to be grounded on Scripture; but the proposition we wish to establish is, that, underlying all these, there has been the acceptance by Christian men of a doctrine of atonement by our Lord Jesus Christ, which, though often out of sight as a dogma, has been the real substratum of faith and action.

The successive internal epochs of the Church—which may be distinguished as follows: (1) that of creed-forming; (2) of definitions; (3) of discussions concerning man's place in the scheme; (4) of God's place; (5) of faith's place; (6) of the Bible's place;—are thus shown to be all connected by the golden sentiment of personal trust in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"A fair account of the mind of the Church on this matter, as revealed along the whole course of earthly literature, would show that the idea which constantly

reappears, amid all variations and fluctuations, is the idea of substitution. The recognition of this is essential to any true account of the history of the doctrine."*

Thus writes the latest, and not the least learned, of the modern commentators on Church history.

We have seen enough to enable us to answer in the affirmative John Henry Newman's question—"Are there any traces of Lutheranism before Luther?"†

The time was come for the restitution to the masses, of sound doctrine, for the reformation of doctrines, morals, and manners, for the birth of true social liberty.

The northern nations had almost to re-discover the truths of the Gospel hidden in the mass of human additions. The Gospel was there, like the metal in the ore, but the latter had to be broken up, and the pure truth separated, before it could manifest its own Divine lustre; and this was an operation rarely practised. Gieseler thus emphatically states the character and result of the mediæval missions:—

"As is usual among rude people when coming into closer contact with the more enlightened, there proceeded from the Romans, then greatly corrupted, pernicious influences rather than enlightenment to the Germans, which were exhibited among the latter in their roughest form—less hidden, in their case, by the external rites prevalent among the Romans. Christianity—as it was then proclaimed, a

* "Development of Christian Doctrine," by Dr. Rainy, Professor of Divinity and Church History, New College, Edinburgh. 1874.

† "Historical Sketches," vol. ii. p. 438.

series of dogmas and laws—could not restrain this corruption. While it presented expiation for all offences, in addition to its prohibitions of them, there was opened up to wild barbarity a way of first enjoying the lust of sin, and then of procuring exemption from the guilt of it. There was little concern for instruction. The public services of religion, by means of their pomp and the use of a foreign (*i.e.* the Latin) language, awakened dark feelings rather than right ideas. As the grossest notions were entertained of hell, so also were similar ideas prevalent respecting the power of the Church, the influence of the saints, the merit of ecclesiastical and monkish exercises, the value of alms to the Church and to the poor. These notions were strengthened by legend and miracles, which were certainly in part an imposition of the clergy, but were far from exerting any good moral influence on the people. The moral influence of Christianity on the multitude was confined to the external influence of church laws and church discipline, so far as these were respected. The period of legal discipline, as a preparation for the Gospel, was now restored.”*

Recurring to the continuity of doctrine, it may be asked, If the true theory of the Atonement was published to the world in all ages of Christianity, where was the necessity for the Reformation? We reply that the latter was needed, not so much for the establishment of new dogma (for it announced no new truth), as for its restoration to a place of authority and power in the hearts and minds of men. It is no part of our present effort to show how doctrine became weakened by the

* Gieseler, vol. ii. p. 157.

successive explanations of Schoolmen; how it became practically nullified by the practices and tenets of the papal system; how it became altogether set aside by the worldly and wicked lives of professed teachers and priests. The papal system had outspread a nominal Christianity in place of Scripture truth. Darkness was universal and complete; save, mayhap, in some cell where the thoughtful monk was startled by simple words of Scripture concerning Christ, sounding like a disused tongue, yet speaking to the conscience and the heart, filling the air with music, carrying with it all the surprise, interest, and freshness of a discovery.

“For everything there is a time: there was a time for the influence quietly exercised upon the mind by the fore-runners of the Reformation, and there was also a time for the heroic action of the Reformers themselves.”*

It is significant to note that within thirty years after the discovery of the art of printing (in 1470), there were published no less than ninety-one editions of the Scriptures; for the most part in Italy.

* Ullman.

IX.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

“Thank God that now the way is made !
The cherub-guarded door,
Through Him on whom our help was laid,
Stands open evermore ;
Who knoweth this is glad at heart,
And swift prepares him to depart
Where Christ is gone before :
Hallelujah ! Hallelujah ! ”

(From the German of Johan Zurick, 1540.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

ON entering the first saloon of the great North German Picture Gallery, in the Pinakothek at Munich, the visitor is sensible of a difference between that and other collections of pictures. The cause is not at first obvious. It is not only in the style of Dürer, Cranach, Holbein, and others, their contemporaries, but in an almost total change in the subjects. Heathen mythology, usually so disagreeably prominent, is in the shade ; the fabulous miracles and martyrdoms of saints are not now foremost, nor the radiant beauty of Madonnas. We look again, and see that the most prominent subject is Christ and His cross. We are in the flush of the Reformation light ; a new aspect has been given to all things ; a new subject engrosses Art. The manner of many of the pictures may be ungraceful, and many things are offensive to our taste ; but the topics are Jesus Christ, the descent of the Spirit, the gift of the written Word. It is impossible to deny to these painters, contemporaries of Erasmus and Luther, the merit of discerning the signs of the times ; or to withhold from them the praise of seeking by their art to set forth Christ alone, and to teach

the infinite value and transcendent glory of His work.

Nowhere may we find a better representation of the doctrine of Holy Scripture concerning God's way of salvation and man's acceptance of it, than in the writings of the great English translator Tyndale. In his "Pathway into the Holy Scripture" there are passages in which the writer has seized the very kernel of the Gospel. One, as an example, is as follows :—

"Likewise, when God's law hath brought the sinner into knowledge of himself, and hath confounded his conscience, and opened up to him the wrath and vengeance of God, then cometh good tidings. The Evangelion showeth unto him the promises of God in Christ, and how that Christ hath purchased pardon for him, and appeased the wrath of God. And the poor sinner believeth, laudeth, and thanketh God through Christ, and breaketh out into exceeding inward joy and gladness, for that he hath escaped so great wrath, so heavy vengeance, so fearful and so everlasting a death. And he henceforth is an hungered and athirst after more righteousness, that he might fulfil the law; and mourneth continually, commending his weakness unto God in the blood of our Saviour Christ Jesus."*

And again :—

"For when the Evangelion is preached, the Spirit of God entereth into them which God hath ordained and appointed unto eternal life; and openeth their eyes, and worketh such belief in them. When the woeful consciences

* Tyndale, "Treatises," P. S., p. 17.

feel and taste how sweet a thing the bitter death of Christ is, and how merciful and loving God is, through Christ's purchasing merits; they begin to love again, and to consent to the law of God, how that it is good and ought so to be, and that God is righteous which made it."*

Tyndale's views burst forth in every page of his writings. We extract from his prologue to the Epistle to the Romans:—

"The sum and whole cause of the writing of this epistle is, to prove that a man is justified by faith only; which proposition whoso denieth, to him is not only this epistle and all that Paul writeth, but also the whole Scripture, so locked up, that he shall never understand it to his soul's health. And to bring a man to understanding and feeling that faith only justifieth, Paul proves that the whole nature of man is so poisoned and so corrupt, yea, and so dead, concerning godly living and godly thinking, that it is impossible for him to keep the law in the sight of God; that is to say, to love it, and of love and willingness to do it as naturally as a man eats or drinks, until he be quickened again and healed through faith. And by justifying, understand no other thing than to be reconciled to God, and to be restored unto His favour, and to have thy sins forgiven thee. And when I say, God justifieth us, understand thereby that God, for Christ's sake, merits and deservings only, receiveth us unto His mercy, favour, and grace, forgiveth us our sins. And when I say, Christ justifieth us, understand thereby that Christ only hath redeemed us, bought, and delivered us out of the wrath of God and damnation, and hath with His works only purchased us the mercy, the favour and grace of God, and the forgiveness of our sins. And when I say that faith justifieth, understand thereby

* Tyndale, "Treatises," P. S., p. 19.

that faith and trust in the truth of God and in the mercy promised us for Christ's sake, and for His deserving and works only, doth quiet the conscience and certify how that our sins be forgiven and we in the favour of God."*

In the eloquent diction of the late Dean of St. Paul's:—

"We may imagine the Gospel, now newly revealed, as it were, in its original language (the older Testament in its native Hebrew), and illustrated by the earlier Greek Fathers, translated into all living languages, and by the new art of printing become of general and familiar use, gradually dispersing all the clouds of wild allegoric interpretation, of mythology, and materialism, which had been gathering over it for centuries, and thus returning to its few majestic primal truths in the Apostolic Creed. We may even imagine the hierarchy receding into their older sphere,—instructors; examples in their families, as in themselves, of all the virtues and charities; the religious administrators of simpler rites."†

It were a vain attempt to picture what would have been the result had the great Reformation of the sixteenth century been and continued to be a purely spiritual movement.

"All these conspiring causes account for the popularity of this movement; its popularity, not on account of the numbers of its votaries, but the class in which it chiefly spread—the lower or middle orders of the cities; in many cases the burghers, now also striving after civil liberties, forming the free municipalities in the cities, and in those

* Tyndale's "Doctrinal Treatises," Parker Society, p. 508.

† Milman, vol. vi. p. 396.

cities not merely opposing the authority of the nobles, but that not less oppressive of the bishops and chapters." *

The controversy of the Reformation was not concerning any proposition of the ancient creed. The Reformers and the Romanists were one as to this. It related to opinions now called Protestant—viz., the authority of Scripture, and the way to God. On both these points an incrustation of traditionary belief in the Church as the official interpreter, and in the priests and sacraments as the official way, had grown up, which was altogether at variance with primitive truth. It is against them on the one hand, and for them on the other, that the war raged unto death. The trade in indulgences brought on a crisis; for all people reflected, with the Jews of old, "Who can forgive sins, but God only?"

Luther, on his way back from Rome, in 1510, meditated on the words which had first impressed themselves on his mind as an insoluble sentence,—"The just shall live by faith,"—until their true and full meaning dawned on his soul; and he says:—

"Through the Gospel, *that* gospel is revealed which avails before God—by which He, out of grace and mere compassion, justifies us through faith. . . . Here I felt at once that I was wholly born again, and that I had entered through open doors into paradise itself."

* "Latin Christianity," vol. iv. p. 173.

One of the earliest public manifestoes of the great German reformer is:—

“There is no one who has died for our sins but Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I repeat once more, let all the evil spirits of earth and hell foam and rage as they will, this is nevertheless true. And if Christ alone takes away sin, we cannot do so by all our works. But good works follow redemption, as surely as fruit appears upon a living tree. This is our doctrine; this the Holy Spirit teacheth, together with all Christian people. We hold it in God’s name. Amen!”*

Luther, whose heart was tender and affectionate, desired to see those whom he loved in possession of the light which had guided him into the path of peace. He availed himself of all the opportunities he possessed as professor, teacher, and leader, as well as of his extensive correspondence, to communicate his treasure to others. One of his old associates of the convent of Erfurth—the monk George Spenlein—was then in the convent of Memmingen, having, perhaps, spent a short time at Wittemberg. Spenlein had commissioned Luther to sell some effects that he had left in his hands: a cloak of Brussels stuff, a work by the Doctor Isenac, and a monk’s hood. Luther carefully executed this commission.

“He got,” says he, “a florin for the cloak, half a florin for the book, and a florin for the hood,” and had forwarded the amount to the Father Vicar, to whom Spenlein was indebted the three florins. But

* D’Aubigné, “History of the Reformation,” vol. i. p. 202.

Luther passed quickly from this account of a monk's effects to a more important subject.

"I should like," says he to Brother George, "to know how it is with your soul. Is it weary of its own righteousness? In a word, does it breathe freely, and put its trust in the righteousness of Christ? In these days pride has drawn many aside, and especially those who labour with all their strength to be righteous. Not understanding the righteousness of God, which is given to us freely in Jesus Christ, they would stand before Him on their own merits. But that can never be. When you and I were living together, you were under this delusion, and so was I. I contend against it unceasingly, and I have not yet entirely overcome it.

"Oh, my dear brother, learn to know Christ and Him crucified. Learn to sing a new song—to despair of your own work, and to cry unto Him, Lord Jesus, Thou art my righteousness, and I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken on Thee what was mine, and given to me what is Thine; what Thou wast not, Thou becamest, that I might become what I was not. Beware, my dear George, of aspiring after such a purity as that thou mayest not have to acknowledge thyself a sinner; for Christ dwells only with sinners. Meditate often on this love of Christ, and you will taste its unspeakable comfort. If our labours and afflictions could give peace to the conscience, why did Christ die upon the cross?

"You will find peace in Him alone; despairing of yourself and of your works, and beholding with what love He spreads His arms to you; taking all your sins on Himself, and bestowing on you all His righteousness."*

So powerfully did Luther hold and exercise this elective affinity for the Gospel that he is often said

* D'Aubigné, "*History of the Reformation*," vol. i. pp. 228-9.

to have believed in the Gospel within the Gospel—a New Testament within a New Testament. This is an exaggeration, for though he wrote that St. John's Gospel and St. Paul's Epistles (especially that to the Romans), and St. Peter's First Epistle, are the true marrow and kernel of all the books, and "to be the books that show Christ, and teach all which it is needful and blessed for thee to know," yet his prefaces to the various books show that he meant by this, not to disparage the others, but to indicate that the evangelical facts and doctrines were more fully and explicitly set forth in these.

And so in another place he writes:—

"A Christian may glory that in Christ he has all things: that all the righteousness and merits of Christ are his own by virtue of that spiritual union which he has with Him by faith. On the other hand, that all his sins are no longer his, but that Christ, through the same union, bears the burden of them. And this is the confidence of Christians, this is the refreshment of their consciences, that by faith our sins cease to be ours judicially, because they are laid on Him, 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.'"

Of Luther, Archdeacon Hare beautifully says:—

"Three hundred years have rolled away since Luther was raised, through Christ's redeeming grace, from the militant church into the triumphant; and throughout these three hundred years, and still at this day, it has been, and is, vouchsafed to him—and so, God willing, it shall be for centuries to come—that he should feed the children of half Germany with the milk of the Gospel by his catechism,

. . . with words wherewith to commend their souls to God, that by his German words, through the blessed fruit of his labours, they should daily and hourly strengthen and enlighten their hearts and souls and minds with that Book of life, in which God's mercy and truth have met together, His righteousness and peace have kissed each other, and are treasured up for the edification of mankind unto the end of the world."*

Melancthon, though he was ready to compromise many doctrines for the sake of peace, was ever firm on the doctrine of justification by imputed righteousness, as Bossuet himself allows. He writes of it as "making the glory of Christ visible."

Zwingle, preaching to the pilgrims at Einsiedlen, in 1507, declares: "Christ, who offered Himself on the cross once for all, is the Sacrifice and Victim which satisfies for all eternity, for the sins of all believers."†

Bullinger, a few years later, may be regarded as the accepted exponent of reformed opinions; and his views respecting the way of salvation do not differ in the least from those of evangelical believers in all ages.

In 1512, Lefevre, the studious doctor at Etaples in Picardy, in his lectures at the University of Paris, and by his published commentaries on Scripture, opened out the great doctrine of justification by faith. It was about the same time that the youthful Farel, from the other side of France, near

* "Remarks on Luther," p. 83.

† Works, vol. i. p. 263, cited by D'Aubigné.

Grenoble, responded, in similar strains, to the teaching of his beloved master.

“It is God alone,” exclaimed Lefevre, “who by His grace justifies unto eternal life! . . . Oh! the unspeakable greatness of that exchange—the Sinless One is condemned, and he who is guilty goes free,—the Blessing bears the curse, and the cursed is brought into blessing,—the Life dies, and the dead live,—the Glory is whelmed in darkness, and he who knew nothing but confusion of face is clothed with glory.”*

Lefevre announced the change in his views by publishing commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul, in which he avowed the long-concealed truth.

“It is God alone who by His grace justifies unto eternal life. There is a righteousness of our own works, and a righteousness which is of grace,—the one a thing of man’s invention, the other coming from God,—the one earthly and passing away, the other divine and everlasting,—the one the shadow and semblance, the other the light and the truth; the one discovering sin and bringing the fear of death, the other revealing grace for the attainment of life.”†
 “Oh! the unspeakable greatness of that exchange!—the Sinless One is condemned, and he who is guilty goes free,—the Blessing bears the curse, and the cursed is brought into blessing,—the Life dies, and the dead live,—the Glory is whelmed in darkness, and he who knew nothing but confusion of face is clothed with glory. They who are saved are saved by the electing grace and will of God . . . Our

* Commentaries, quoted from D’Aubigné.

† Quoted by and from D’Aubigné’s “Reformation in Germany,” vol. iii. p. 461.

religion has only one foundation, one object, one Lord Jesus Christ, blessed for ever ! He hath trodden the winepress alone. Let us not then take the name of Paul, of Apollos, or of Peter. The cross of Christ alone opens heaven, and shuts the gate of hell."

Farel received the truth with love.

"Now," said he, "everything appears to me to wear a different aspect. Scripture is elucidated, prophecy is opened, and the epistles carry wonderful light into my soul. A voice before unknown—the voice of Christ, my Shepherd and my Teacher—speaks to me with power."

The truth spread and prevailed in many of the provinces of fair France. In Artois, Berquin, a worthy, intelligent, intrepid Christian gentleman, afterwards a martyr, devoted himself to teaching from house to house, in his own neighbourhood, the doctrine of salvation by Christ alone.

Briconnet, bishop of Meaux, held, with Lefevre, the doctrine of gratuitous justification, and fostered it in his diocese.

"The Reformation was not, therefore, in France, an importation from strangers ; it took its birth on the French territory. Its seed germinated in Paris—its earliest shoots were struck in the University itself, that ranked second in power in Romanized Christendom. God deposited the first principles of the work in the kindly hearts of some inhabitants of Picardy and Dauphiny, before it had begun in any other country of the globe. The Swiss Reformation was independent of that of Germany ; the French Reformation was, in like manner, independent of that of Switzer-

land and that of Germany. The work sprang up in these different countries at one and the same time, without communication between them,—as in a field of battle the various divisions that compose the army are seen in motion at the same instant, although the order to advance has not passed from one to the other, but all have heard the word of command proceeding from a higher authority. The time had come—the nations were ripe, and God was everywhere beginning the revival of His Church.* Nevertheless, Luther is the great workman of the sixteenth century, and, in the fullest import of the term, the first Reformer. Lefevre is not as complete as Calvin, Farel, or Luther. There is about him that which reminds us of Wittenberg of Geneva,—but a something besides, that tells of the Sorboone; he is the foremost Catholic in the Reformation movement, and the latest of the Reformers in the Catholic movement.”†

In the year 1525, Egidio di Porta, an Augustinian monk on the Lake of Como, writes thus to Zwingle:—

“It is now fourteen years since I, under the impulse of a certain pious feeling, but not according to knowledge, withdrew from my parents and assumed the black cowl. If I did not become learned or devout, I at least appeared to be so, and for seven years discharged the office of a preacher of God’s word—alas! in deep ignorance. I savoured not the things of Christ; I ascribed nothing to faith, all to works. But God would not permit His servant to perish for ever. He brought me to the dust. I was made to cry out, ‘Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?’ At length my heart heard the delightful voice: ‘Go to

* D’Aubigné, “History of the Reformation,” vol. iii. p. 472.

† *Ib.*, p. 474.

Ulric Zwingle, and he will tell thee what thou shouldst do.' O ravishing sound! My soul found ineffable peace in that sound. Do not think that I mock you; for you—nay, not you, but God by your means—rescued me from the snare of the fowler. But why do I say *me*? For I trust you have saved others along with me."

Similar earnest requests, founded on new-born faith in Christ, were addressed to the Reformers from many religious houses.

All these prove the truth of Dr. Ullman's assertion that "the Reformation, viewed in its most general character, was the reaction of Christianity as gospel against Christianity as law."

About 1535, the learned and much admired Bishop of Carpentras in the Venaissin, having imbibed liberal evangelical sentiments, and expressed a candid appreciation of the German Reformers, made his house a resort for students. After officiating a short time as cardinal, he retired to his beloved retreat. He ever remained an adherent of Rome, but was undoubtedly a true disciple of Christ.

So at Padua, and at all the seats of learning in Northern Italy, the scholars were resorting to the Word of God, and avowing evangelical doctrines.

Cardinal Contarini, eminent for a learning deemed universal, held the Lutheran doctrine of justification. This was of course the case with Peter Martyr, Celio Curio, Flaminio, Vittoria Colonna, and even with Michael Angelo Buonarroti, and a number of others, amongst whom were not

a few holding various offices in church and state. Some of these—as Carnesecchi and Ochino—after much controversy, became Dissenters; but the majority, like Contarini, continued staunch upholders of the papacy; and some, like Cardinal Pole, became all the more vehement in their attachment to Rome. The Council of Trent condemned Luther's doctrine; and obedience to the Council was the test which Pole and others were unable to abide. Dr. Hook says :—

“But we may here observe the broad distinction which must be made between the Protestants and those Italian Reformers among whom Pole took a prominent part. On what we may call the philosophy of Christianity—on Augustinianism—that philosophy which is based on the grand doctrine of justification by faith only, both parties were agreed; and, until the Council of Trent asserted authoritatively the opposite doctrine, the most determined Papist would regard the subject of justification as an open question. On this point nearly all the Italian Reformers were of one mind, and maintained truly, that this great truth was compatible with a belief in the sacraments as means of grace. The Italians did not attack the sacerdotal or monastic system, and they asserted the supremacy of the pope. When an Italian had philosophised with a German, and the German proceeded to show how the doctrine of justification by faith only militated against all those mediæval traditions held sacred at Rome, when monasteries were denounced, and the pope was deposed from his supremacy—then a separation took place between the two parties, sometimes abruptly, sometimes gradually. They would all agree to fire an unshot gun in order that they might alarm the slumberers, and awaken the watchers

of Israel to a sense of their danger, and of the consequent necessity of reform; but when one party would load the guns and prepare for a spiritual sack of Rome, the Italians were found on the side of the pope; or if they could not conscientiously support the papacy, they consulted their safety by flight.”*

A remarkable letter written by the inhabitants of Bologna to the Saxon ambassador at the court of Charles V., and quoted by McCrie, proves that the doctrines of grace were then held and valued by many of the leading men in the university there. They speak of liberty to follow Christ according to Scripture and conscience, as the thing “desired, demanded, expected, and loudly called for by the most pious, learned, and honourable men in the most illustrious cities of Italy, and even in Rome itself.”†

About 1537, Paleario was employing his leisure intervals, in the duties of his professorship or tutorship at Siena, in composing his “Treatise on the Benefits of Christ’s Death.” At this time, under threatened accusations, he wrote to Bellanti:—

“Cotta asserted that, if I continued to live, there would not remain a vestige of religion in the state, because, when one day I was asked what was the chief thing given by God to mankind in which they could place their salvation, I replied, ‘Christ.’ ‘What the second?’ ‘Christ.’ ‘And the third?’ ‘Christ.’”

The mode in which the true faith of Christ was held by many persons who never dissented from

* “Lives of Archbishops of Canterbury,” vol. viii. p. 58.

† “Reformation of Italy,” p. 110.

the Roman Communion, is well exemplified in the writings of Juan Valdés, the thoughtful and illustrious Spaniard, who, unconnected with the Reformation then commencing its course, sought out for himself the doctrine of Scripture, and enunciated it in the midst of a select and choice circle of friends at Naples. "At a part of the city of Naples, now covered with a magnificent succession of palaces and villas, and including a fashionable drive of a mile and a half in extent, bounded towards the bay by shaded promenades amongst delicious gardens, laved by the murmuring waters, and, in the days of which we are writing, studded with a few villas set in verdure, lies the quarter of Chiaga. Here Juan de Valdés had a country house, and here his friends resorted to hear him discourse on sacred subjects. Here he received on the Sunday a select number of his most intimate friends. . . . The Sunday meetings may have continued four or five years. These Sabbaths of studious Christians, this exchange of subjects, this intercourse of thought between the proposers, the day, the pure elevation of mind they brought, as it were, with them, the situation, the beauty of the country, the transparent skies of a southern climate, the low murmurs of the bay, would all be favourable to the purposes of Valdés; and from these social meetings with his friends, his purely religious works appear to have derived their origin and form." *

* Life of Juan Valdés, prefixed to the "Hundred and Ten Considerations," p. 138. Quaritch, 1865.

The company thus assembled comprised persons whose names stand out with prominence even in an age so remarkable as that of Charles V.—Peter Martyr Vermiglio, the Nestor of the Reformation; Ochino, the fervid orator; Giulia da Milano, the Reformer of the Grisons; Galeota, a Neapolitan gentleman who was released from the prison of the Inquisition only by popular tumult; Benedetto Casano, an ardent student of the New Testament in Greek; Mollio and Folengo, devoted and devout, but evangelical Roman Catholic monks; Caserta, a nobleman who afterwards laid down his life for the Gospel's sake; Flaminio, justly distinguished as a learned Reformer; Jacopo Bonfadio; Pietro Carnesecchi, the pope's secretary, whose scholarship, integrity, and elegance could not save him from being burnt alive at Rome in 1567; Isabella Manrique, a noble wealthy Spanish lady, whose diligence in doing good did not save her from persecution; the celebrated Vittoria Colonna; the equally famous Giulia Gonzaga, who was the special patroness of the accomplished Spaniard. Never, probably, was there a more interesting gathering of disciples; never were loftiest subjects discussed by a company of more thoughtful and accomplished minds.

In the "*Alfabeto Christiano*" of Juan Valdés*—a record of conversations held with the renowned lady Giulia Gonzaga, in 1535-6—he makes no reference

* Translated by B. Wiffen, 1860. (Only 100 copies of the English edition printed for circulation.)

to the worship of the Virgin, or the intercession of saints. Ignoring these by implication, he describes the mass as an incentive to adoring gratitude for the work of Christ; confession as more entirely to be made to God than to man; communion, prayer, and fasting, in the language of a Protestant. With regard to the sum and substance of Christianity, his language is truly evangelical :—

“ If you wish to banish all fear from your soul, love Christ, Signora; for no fear can dwell in the soul which sets its view with a lively and efficacious apprehension on Christ crucified, considering with entire faith that Christ made atonement and payment for it.”*

Christ, by His suffering,—

“ Established a new covenant between God and mankind, annulling and making void the old. And the new covenant is, that we, mankind, should believe ourselves to be justified by the blood of Jesus Christ, and that Christ justifies us, forgiving our sins.”†

“ The law teaches us what we have to do; the gospel gives us spirit by which we are enabled to fulfil it. The law makes the wound, the gospel heals it; the law slays, the gospel gives life.”‡

Valdés thus discoursed on justification by faith, in his commentaries on St. Paul’s Epistles :—

“ And I understand that they submit themselves to the righteousness of God, who, recognising God’s righteousness,

* “Alfabeto,” English edition, p. 73.

† *Ib.*, p. 179.

‡ Reminding the reader of the exquisite and forcible contrast of the two in Tyndale’s “Pathway,”—“Doctrinal Treatises,” p. 8.

and confessing their own unrighteousness, renounce and condemn all their righteousnesses, and profess to be righteous only through God's free grace, who executed the rigour of His justice upon Christ, in order to assure all those who renounce and condemn their own righteousness, yielding themselves to God, that He accepts and holds them as just, on account of the justice which He executed upon Christ."*

And in the Eleventh Consideration :—

" God being just, and man unjust, man does not see how he shall escape the judgment of God. But the goodness of God is so great, that it is His will that even this, His perfection, which to our minds appears injurious to man, should redound to his welfare no less than all the rest. He determined to inflict upon His own Son all the rigour of that justice which He ought to execute upon all men for their impiety and sins, in order that men, holding this truth for an assured fact—to wit, that God has executed the rigour of His justice upon His own Son—may know that it is as much to their welfare that God is just, as that He is merciful ; it being sure that, in administering justice, He cannot fail to save those who regard the punishment already inflicted upon God's own Son as their own."

Intellectual discourse was part of the ordinary outdoor life of the Greeks. The beautiful skies and balmy air of Southern Italy afford to its residents similar delightful opportunities for conferences and converse. We find in the writings of the Fathers, traces of the practice of holding such gatherings

* " Considerations of Juan Valdés," translated by J. Betts, Quaritch, p. 145.

for argument concerning the claims of Christianity. From the days of St. Paul at Athens, down to those of Juan Valdés at Naples, and ever since, the Gospel has been in this way proclaimed and defended amidst the beauties of nature. The refreshing truth had at this time seized hold of the educated portion of Italian society; we read concerning Mantua and the Campania:—

“In our age we behold the admirable spectacle of women (whose sex is more addicted to vanity than learning) having their minds deeply imbued with the knowledge of heavenly doctrine.”

So hopeful were the signs of the times in Italy, that Curio writes:—

“If the Lord still continue, as He has begun, to grant prosperous success to the Gospel, the delectable embassy of reconciliation and grace, we shall behold the whole world thronging, more than it has ever done at any former period, to this asylum and fortified city—to Jesus Christ, its Prince, and to its three towers, faith, hope, and charity; so that, with our own eyes, we may yet see the kingdom of God of much larger extent than that which the enemy of mankind has acquired, not by his own power, but by the providence of God.”

And in a strain still more animated, as though in a poetic fervour,—

“You shall live, Celio; be not afraid—you shall live to see it. The joyful sound of the Gospel has within our own day reached the Scythians, Thracians, Indians, and Africans. Christ, the King of kings, has taken possession of

Rhoetia and Helvetia ; Germany is under His protection ; He has reigned, and will again reign, in England ; He sways His sceptre over Denmark and the Cymbrian nations. Prussia is His, Poland and the whole of Sarmatia are on the point of yielding to Him ; He is pressing forward to Pannonia ; Muscovy is in His eye ; He beckons France to Him ; Italy, our native country, is travailing in birth ; and Spain will speedily follow. Even the Jews, as you perceive, have abated their former aversion to Christianity.”*

The doctrine of Ochino concerning human redemption may be gathered from his sermon on justification, which attained the popularity always attending a timely production in accord with current sympathies :—

“ By which means, animated not by our own, but by the Spirit of Christ, the Son of God, and as if it were born anew—aye, truly born again!—we are entitled to call God Father, before whom we may stand boldly, as if we were uncontaminated by even the shadow of sin. For, ‘ He who spared not His own Son, but gave Him for us all, will He not with Him also freely give us all things ? ’ Now, therefore, we are just and innocent, not from our own justice and innocence, but we are free from sins because Christ has made them His own, and delivered us by His death ; and also it is by the justice of Christ, and the purity which He hath given and transferred to us so freely, that we are able to appear rich and lovely before God. But these gifts, these virtues, these immortal and heavenly treasures, depend upon one faith, and one certain persuasion (which is only to be received from God). Lastly : some may imagine that we are thus justified by Christ, as if by an advocate, a pleader, a defender, or an intercessor, because

* McCrie, “ Reformation in Italy,” p. 215.

He requests for us from God the Father the remission of our sins. This truly we will not deny ; but those who thus speak, though they say all, yet say nothing, for they omit the most important, the most Divine, and most necessary things, which have been given to us through Christ. For, first, Christ transferred our sins to Himself, and desired them to be ascribed to Him from His great kindness, and with the consent, and by the command, of His Father ; which Isaiah, the beloved prophet of God, long ago predicted. Secondly : He not only accepted them, as if He Himself had committed all these sins (who was free from the shadow of blame), but desired to suffer the most agonizing death, by which He might satisfy Divine justice. Nor was He content with the sacrifice. He gave to us His innocence, His justice, His holiness, His wisdom, and—what was greater than all—His spirit, His soul, His breath. And in proportion to the extent of our faith, all these will be given to us. For this faith is the measure of all the rest of the gifts. This, then, is that righteousness of a Christian, or justification ; this is what he said it was, to be justified by Christ." *

Whilst the Church in England was being led by the passions of the monarch into revolt against the papal power, the bishops, including as well those favourable to Romanism as those who opposed it, in pursuance of a royal commission issued in 1540, and confirmed by Parliament, drew up a declaration of doctrine, called, " The Necessary Condition of a Christian Man." This deals with justification in a way not yet removed from the incrustations of error. But very soon the full restoration

* Bernard Ochino's " Sermon on Justification," 1554.

of the doctrine of St. Paul, of St. Augustine, and of Luther, proceeded in England with a rapidity and diffusiveness unknown elsewhere, save, perhaps, in the Netherlands. The people received it gladly. The expressions of Latimer in his final disputation with the Marian Commissioners previous to his martyrdom, may well be taken as a summary of popular belief, as well as a conclusive exposition of the convictions which sustained himself and his fellow-prisoners Cranmer, Bradford, and Ridley, with whom he had conferred, and for whom he spake. Latimer says:—

“We four were thrust into one chamber, as men not to be accounted of (but, God be thanked, to our great joy and comfort). There did we together read over the New Testament with great deliberation and painful study; and I assure you, as I will answer at the tribunal throne of God’s Majesty, we could find in the testament of Christ’s body and blood no other presence but a spiritual presence; nor that the mass was any sacrifice for sins: but in that heavenly book it appeared that the sacrifice which Christ Jesus our Lord did upon the cross was perfect, holy, and good; that God the Heavenly Father did require none other, nor that never again to be done; but was pacified with that only, omnisufficient, and most painful sacrifice of that sweet slain Lamb, Christ our Lord, for our sins.”*

The very last answer given by the heroic old man on the day of his condemnation, was as follows:—
“Christ made one oblation and sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, and that a perfect sacri-

* “Remains of Latimer,” Parker Society, p. 257.

fice; neither needeth there to be any other propitiation."

Similar heroism and constancy was manifested by all four of these illustrious men. Long imprisonment did not alter their convictions; they continued, by conduct, by testimony, and by letters, to show that Christ must be held dearer than life. In the May following Latimer wrote his last address to his people, full of solemn courage and earnest love:—

"And forasmuch, my dearly beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, as I am persuaded of you, that you be in the number of the wise builders, which have made their foundations sure by faith upon the infallible words of God's truth, and will now bring forth the fruits to God's glory after your vocation as occasion shall be offered, although the sun burn never so hot, nor the weather be never so foul—wherefore I cannot but signify unto every one of you to go forward accordingly after your Master Christ."

Hooper, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, and martyr, in his "Declaration of Christ and of His Office," published during his exile at Zurich, in 1547, thus avows his doctrine:—

"Paul (Phil. ii.) saith that Christ humbled Himself unto the death of the cross. (Heb. ii.) 'He was made partaker of man's mortal nature, that by death He might destroy him that had the empire and power of death, that is to say, the devil.' John called Him 'the Lamb that doth take away the sin of the world' (John i.). All the sacrifices of the old law were figures and types of this only Sacrifice, which was appointed by God to die, and to suffer the ire and displea-

sure of God for the sin of man, as though He Himself were a sinner and had merited this displeasure. The greatness of this ire, sorrow, confusion, ignominy, and contempt, neither angel nor man can express; His pains were so intolerable, and His passion so dolorous, His death so obedient to the Father's will, that it was not only a sacrifice, but also a just recompense, to satisfy for all the world, solely and only, as Christ taught Nicodemus (John iii.); as Paul (Heb. vii., viii., ix., x.); Isaiah (liii.); and so all the prophets and patriarchs; and such a sacrifice as once for all sufficient." * "Except the Son of God had been an equal and just redemption, a price correspondent to counterpoise and satisfy the blame and guilt of man's sin, God would not have taken one soul from the right and justice of the devil." "For a conclusion, justification is a free remission of sin, and acceptation into the favour of God, for Christ's merits." †

Let us take Becon as an illustration of the Reformation belief,—the passage is too important to abridge:—

"Christ is that Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world: therefore there is none other sacrifice for sin but Christ alone. No man goeth up into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of Man, which is in heaven: therefore so many as go up into heaven, go up only by Christ. He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not in the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon Him: therefore they alone shall be saved, which with a strong faith believe Christ to be their Saviour. Every one, saith Christ, that drinketh of the water that I give him shall never more thirst: therefore Christ is a sufficient Saviour for so many

* "Early Writings of Bishop Hooper"; Parker Society, p. 48.

† *Ib.*, p. 59.

as repent and believe. Christ is that living Bread which came down from heaven ; if any man eateth of that Bread he shall live for evermore : therefore he that tasteth Christ aright, needeth none other Saviour to give him everlasting life. Christ is that Good Shepherd which giveth His life for His sheep : therefore so many as are saved, are saved by Christ's death. Christ is the resurrection and life : therefore by Him we rise out of sin, and obtain life eternal. Christ is the way, truth, and life ; no man cometh to the Father but by Him : therefore by Christ alone we ascend and go up unto the presence of the Father. Without Christ we can do nothing : therefore without Him we cannot be saved. Christ is the vine ; he that abideth in Him bringeth forth much fruit : therefore he that casteth away Christ, and seeketh any other Saviour, is that tree which bringeth forth no fruit, and therefore shall he be hewn down, and cast into the fire. Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification : therefore by Christ's death are we delivered from our sins, and by His resurrection justified and made righteous.

“We being justified by faith, have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ : therefore Christ it is which maketh the atonement between God the Father and us. By the sin of Adam alone, came damnation on all men ; even so by the righteousness of Christ alone, came the justification of life upon all men : therefore as we were damned by the sin of Adam alone, so are we saved, justified, and preserved unto everlasting life, by the righteousness of Christ alone. Everlasting life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord : therefore so many as obtain everlasting life, come unto it by the free gift of God—yea, and that for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Christ is appointed of God to be our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption : therefore by Christ are we made wise, righteous, holy, and the children of redemption. We

are washed, we are sanctified—yea, we are made righteous through the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God : therefore by Christ's name and the Spirit of our God are we made pure, holy, and righteous.

“ Christ, who knew no sin, became sin for our sake—that is, a sacrifice for our sins : therefore those sins that are put away, are put away by the sacrifice of Christ. Christ, when He was rich, became poor for our sake, that by His poverty He should make us rich : therefore so many as be made rich, are enriched by Christ. If righteousness cometh by the law, then died Christ in vain : therefore they that are made righteous, are made righteous by the death of Christ ; and whosoever seeketh to be justified by any other means than by the death of Christ, he goeth about to make Christ's death of none effect, and so is he a plain antichrist. By Christ we have redemption, and by His blood remission of sins : therefore by Christ is our ransom paid, and by His blood are our sins forgiven us. Christ is our Peace : therefore by Him have we tranquillity, quietness, and rest in our conscience. By Christ have we free entrance unto the Father : therefore so many as come unto the Father, come by Christ. Christ is gone up on high, and hath led away captivity captive, and hath given gifts unto men : therefore He it is that giveth remission of sins. Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us to God, an offering and sweet-smelling sacrifice : therefore for this sweet and odoriferous sacrifice of Christ, God the Father pardoneth our sins. Christ is the Head of the body of the congregation : therefore He it is that saveth His members. It hath pleased the Father that in Christ all fulness should dwell, and that by Him all things should be reconciled unto Himself, whether they be things upon earth or in heaven, that through the blood of His cross, He might make peace, even through His own self : therefore all they that are reconciled and set at one with God the

Father, have obtained this by the blood of Christ. This is a true saying, and by all means worthy that we should embrace it, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners: therefore Christ it is that saveth sinners. There is one God, and one Atonement-Maker between God and man—even the Man Christ Jesus, which gave Himself a ransom for all men: therefore as there is but one God, so is there but one Atonement-Maker, and this is Jesus Christ, by whom alone we are redeemed. We are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ, done once for all: therefore so many as are made holy have obtained that holiness only by the sacrifice of Christ, which He once for all offered on the altar of the cross, so consummate and perfect, that there remaineth none other sacrifice for sin.”

In referring to these records of the past, we must bear in mind how much more there was of the men than there is of the books. How feeble is the testimony of their words, compared with all that they must have felt and suffered in connection with such sentiments!* We obtain but an inferior impression of the life and power of an assembly of men from the mere report or relation of its occurrence, compared with that which we realize by being one of the actors or actual spectators.

In Spain, as in other parts of Catholic Europe, there were, during the completest prevalence of spiritual darkness, numerous instances of the discovery and maintenance of true religion. These

* Of course the theology of the feelings must not be judged of by the same rigid rules as that of the intellect. The latter will make definitions which the former declines to accept or be bound by. But both kinds are essential to our present argument.

are specially found at the dawn of the Reformation period. Juan de Avila, the Apostle of Andalusia, was accused of Lutheranism in 1521, on account of his attachment to the doctrines of Holy Scripture. Manrique, the then Inquisitor General, entertained so high a respect for him that he saved him from the extreme effects of ecclesiastical wrath. The good old man was subjected to imprisonment only, and his works prohibited. But this was merely a sample of the fate which befel the restorers of the truth. Their dark doom has, for the most part, withdrawn from our view the particulars of that suffusion of evangelical sentiment that prevailed at this early period among the learned men of Spain. From the year 1521, the date of the briefs issued by the Government of Spain forbidding the introduction of Luther's treatises, to the year 1570, when the Reformation may be said to have been successfully suppressed, the tide of horrid persecution rises higher and higher as the years advance. On the one side are learned, loyal believers in the work of Christ, imprisoned, tempted, tortured, burnt; on the other, relentless upholders of a corrupt Church. The sufferings of the evangelicals in Spain appear to us more striking than those endured in other countries by reason of the mystery under which arrests were made, the solemn character and elaborate forms of the judicial process, the relentless severity of the sentences, and the illustrious character of many of the sufferers.

One of the few treatises preserved to us, is

that of Dr. Constantine Ponce de la Fuente, Court chaplain, preacher to Charles V., professor of theology in the college at Seville. It is entitled "The Confession of a Sinner," and contains an explicit statement of Gospel truth, written in sadness, under conviction of the consequences of its avowal. Rank, learning, privilege, age, patronage, could not save the writer from the fangs of the Inquisition. He was suddenly arrested, and then he languished and died in the dungeons of the "Holy Office" after two years' duress. He says, speaking of the work of Christ :—

"Hast Thou not given satisfaction for that which Thou hast not done? Is not Thy blood a sacrifice for the pardon of all the sins of the human race? Is it not true that the treasures of Thy grace avail more for my welfare, than all Adam's sin and misery for my ruin? Hast Thou not wept on my account, asking pardon for me; and Thy Father, has He not heard Thee? Who then can remove from my heart its confidence in such promises? Had I, Lord, been the only person born into the world; or had *I* only been a sinner and all others righteous, Thou wouldest not have foreborne to die for *me*, since Thou didst not need either them or me. And such I am, and such have been my works, that they have, as it were, constrained Thy mercy, not only to die for me, but that Thou shouldest die the very same death, with all the same incidents with which Thou hast died for all, in order to magnify the more Thy mercy, and to render my pledge greater. I reckon, O Lord, and will do so truthfully, that I alone need the benefits which Thou hast distributed amongst all. Since all the sins are mine, Thy death is wholly mine. Since I have committed the sins of

all, I shall boldly confide in Thee, that Thy sacrifice and Thy pardon are wholly mine, although wrought on behalf of all." *

A bold endeavour was now made in the Protestant States to unify evangelical religious thought by the natural method of setting up a standard in the battle-field which had been won. To effect this object the "Decades," or expository sermons of Bullinger, were adopted, as containing the sum and substance of reformed theology. Convocation, in 1586, ordered that every one having care of souls, and under the degree of Master of Arts, should provide himself with a Bible and Bullinger's "Decades" in Latin and English, and read over one sermon every week, making notes in a paper book, to be shown to some preacher appointed to examine it.

The works of Calvin may be adduced as a test of the catholicity of evangelical doctrine. Because, in his mode of explaining God's sovereignty, he is more arbitrary than the whole tenor of Scripture may be thought to require, he is often alluded to as though his Christian divinity differed from that of the general Church, which is not the case. In writing of the Gospel as a remedy for the condition of mankind, he says:—

"In this case Christ became an Intercessor to entreat for him; that Christ took upon Him and suffered the punishment which by the just judgment of God did hang over all sinners; that He hath purged with His blood those evils

* "Confession of a Sinner," translated by J. T. Betts, 1867.

that made them hateful to God ; that by His expiation is sufficient satisfaction and sacrifice made to God the Father ; that by this Intercessor His wrath was appeased ; that within this foundation resteth the peace between God and men ; that upon this bond is contained His good will toward them."

And, lest the distasteful allusion to the appeasing of God's wrath should offend, he apologises for it just before, by saying that—

"Such manner of phrases are applied to our capacity, that we may the better understand how miserable and wretched our estate is, being out of Christ. . . . For if it were not spoken in express words, that the wrath and vengeance of God and everlasting death did not rest upon us, we would less acknowledge how miserable we should be without God's mercy, and would less regard the benefit of deliverance." *

The length of the following extract will not be objected to by those to whom the great work of God, in the salvation of mankind, is an object of surpassing interest :—

"Therefore in respect of our corrupted nature, and then of evil life added unto it, truly we are all in displeasure of God, guilty in His sight, and born to damnation of hell. But because the Lord will not lose that which is His in us, He findeth yet somewhat that He of His goodness may love. For howsoever we be sinners by our own fault, yet we remain His creatures. Howsoever we purchased death unto ourselves, yet He made us unto life. So is He moved, by mere and free loving of us, to receive us into favour.

* Calvin's "Institutes," p. 132.

But since there is a perpetual and unappeasable disagreement between righteousness and iniquity, so long as we remain sinners He cannot receive us wholly. Therefore that taking away all manner of disagreement, He might wholly reconcile us to Him, He doth by expiation, set forth by the death of Christ, take away whatsoever evil is in us, that we, which before were unclean and impure, may now appear righteous and holy in His sight. Therefore God the Father doth with His love prevent and go before our reconciliation in Christ—yea, because He first loved us, therefore He afterward doth reconcile us unto Himself. But because, until Christ with His death come to succour us, there remaineth wickedness in us, which deserveth God's indignation, and is accursed and damned in His sight, therefore we are not fully and firmly joined to God, until Christ do join us. Therefore, if we will assure ourselves to have God made well pleased and favourable unto us, we must fasten our eyes and minds upon Christ only, as indeed we obtain by Him only, that our sins be not imputed to us, the imputing whereof draweth with it the wrath of God." *

If we claim for Calvin's "*Institutes*" the merit of setting forth the doctrine of the Atonement according to views which have been held from the days of our Lord until now, we do not intend to affirm that this is true of all the propositions contained in the great compendium referred to. There are aspects of truth developed or displayed there, which, in the judgment of wise men, are not warranted by Scripture. Undue prominence is given to certain deductions unexpressed in Scripture; but with regard to the way of a sinner's acceptance by God there is no

* Calvin's "*Institutes*," p. 132.

contested proposition throughout the whole of this vast summary.

Calvin showed his great respect and affection for Luther on every opportunity, and rejoiced also in his own accord with Melancthon. The Genevan divines, the Wittemberg theologians, the Protestant princes and commonalty, lived in habitual friendly intercourse; they also acknowledged the Waldenses as brethren. We know how kindly and brotherly they behaved to the refugees from England in the Marian persecution. But in May 1577, this public concord was disturbed, and indeed displaced, by an Act which strangely enough bears the name of the *Formula of Concord*, passed by the German princes at Closter Bergen. In vain did Queen Elizabeth protest against this, in vain did she send the accomplished Sir Philip Sidney to remonstrate, in vain did she follow this up by sending eminent divines; the German princes persevered in their purpose, and separated themselves from the evangelical churches of England, Scotland, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, and Hungary. Thus the progress of reform was stayed, enthusiasm diverted, discord introduced, and truth arrested.

It may be asked, why, if there was essential union of doctrine, especially amongst the Protestants, was there not also public union? We reply that individual believers, in finding different paths whereby to leave Rome, agreed in the importance to be assigned to the cardinal truths of evangelical religion. They differed, however, in the less important tenets

whereby these were to be accompanied, and even in the words in which they were to be expressed. Thus in the lifetime of Luther and of Melancthon were manifested the differences between these and Zwinglius and Calvin, as representative men. Yet the sympathy of each for the other in the cardinal truth concerning the place of Christ's work for the sinner, held them together, if not in one mind, at least in one heart. After the first expression of dogmatic differences, the inner power of evangelical truth united them, and a common front was exhibited to the enemy.*

A true union, in the fullest sense—in a sense which outlasts time itself—became possible at first, and is only possible now, in Christ and His doctrine; a union of mind and heart in the reception of redemptive truth, independent of all social, national, or political distinctions.

After a burst of evangelism, the Reformers fell into controversy,—first with Episcopalianism, in the days of Queen Elizabeth; secondly with Presbyterianism, in the days of the Commonwealth; and in this unfortunate manner squandered their strength.

Yet the theological writings of the sixteenth century display the power of Christian life amidst the din of continual disputes. The exhibition teaches

* "It is well to feel this, and to make it felt, that believers, with whatever infirmities, drawing from one fountain of knowledge, and sitting at the feet of one teacher, have been learning the same lessons."
—*Dr. Rainy.*

us that creeds are not the chief thing. Religion is not mere dogma, formulated into a few sentences, and thenceforward to be preserved, like type-specimens in a national museum. It is living, plastic truth, received into the hearts and minds of men, and manifested under the varying individualities of human character and the changing circumstances of human society.

In the review of the actual effect of truth on the minds and lives of its professors, we cannot fail to discover that there have been, from the first, two leading types of thought. The one, held by the minority, has magnified the subjective work of redemption, valuing it most for the change which it effects in the believer; the other, held by the great majority, has dwelt most on its objective character. The promoters of the latter have been the most conspicuous in the advancement of truth. Both parties alike share, more or less, each other's sentiments, both ground their convictions on the expiatory work of Christ, and derive their joy, and yield their obedience, from a belief in Christ's vicarious sufferings, accepted as an atonement for transgression. We like to follow the example of good Bishop Ridley when he says:—

“In these matters I am so fearful that I dare not speak farther—yea, almost none otherwise, than the very text doth, as it were, lead me by the hand.”

Or of Hooker:—

“Let it be counted folly, or frenzy, or fury whatsoever, it

is our comfort and our wisdom ; we care for no knowledge in the world but this—that man hath sinned, and God hath suffered ; that God hath made Himself the Son of man, and that men are made the righteousness of God.”*

The Reformers, from the necessities of their position, made it their chief endeavour to find and declare God’s truth concerning the way of salvation. Their culture, and even their divinity, in other respects, were neglected for this. Hence their writings have an aspect of narrowness. They strove earnestly to supply that which was the great want of their times, and that which indeed is an abiding necessity for man at all times.

Creeds and Confessions, whatever their merits, have not preserved the Church from defection, or given religious unity to the world. These results, though aimed at and anticipated, are clearly not within the limits of human power. The Scriptures themselves have not produced unity ; how then can it be expected from the creeds ? But the latter have nevertheless had their uses as embodiments of thought.

The seventh chapter of the Decrees of the Council of Trent, passed the 13th January, 1547, contains the final deliverance of the Roman church concerning the grounds of a sinner’s justification. It confounds, or rather amalgamates, justification and sanctification, and attributes both, instrumentally, to baptism ; but in regard to the act of justification

* Hooker, “ Discourse on Justification.”

itself, its propositions are those which have been accepted by the Church of Christ from first to last. The decree runs :—

“The causes of justification are these: the *final* cause, the glory of God, and of Christ, and life eternal; the *efficient* cause, the merciful God, who fully cleanses and sanctifies, sealing and anointing with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance; the *meritorious* cause, His well-beloved and only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who, through His great love where-with He loved us, even when we were enemies, merited justification for us by His most holy suffering on the cross, and made satisfaction for us to God the Father.”

The Confession of the Reformed Churches of France, adopted in 1559, and still forming the basis of their confederation, expresses the common faith concerning the work of Christ, and its place in Christian theology, in terms which would, we apprehend, be still accepted by every evangelical community, and which would also have been accepted, had they been proposed, by all Christians from the first.*

The Heidelberg Catechism of 1566 uses language which contains more specific reference to Christ's

* “17. Nous croyons que par le sacrifice unique que le Seigneur Jésus a offert en la croix, nous sommes réconciliés à Dieu, pour être tenus et réputé justes devant lui, parce que nous ne lui pouvons être agréables, ni être participants de son adoption, sinon d'autant qu'il nous pardonne nos fautes et les ensevelit. Ainsi nous protestons que Jésus-Christ est notre lavement entier et parfait; qu'en sa mort nous avons entière satisfaction pour nous acquitter de nos forfaits et iniquités dont nous sommes coupables, et ne pouvons être délivré que par ce remède.”

work of satisfaction, than the eleventh Article of the Church of England, framed subsequently; but the difference arises from want of amplification in the latter, as the reference to the homily shows. The Heidelberg Article runs:—

“How art thou justified before God? Only by a genuine faith in Jesus Christ, so that God, without any merit of mine, out of pure grace, gives and reckons me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never contracted any sin, and had myself accomplished the obedience which Christ rendered for me.”

A great effort of Protestant Christians in the closing part of the sixteenth century, towards a manifestation of their substantial unity in matters of opinion, was made in the “Harmony of Protestant Confessions,” first published in Latin in the year 1518, and in English in 1586. This was originally entered upon at the instance of the French Protestants, and finally settled at a synod held at Frankfort in 1577. The professed object was to furnish an answer to the accusations of the Papists, who were perpetually reproaching the Protestants for their divisions and for the variety of their creeds. The assembly at Frankfort committed the execution of the work to Beza and others. Successive synods interested themselves in the project, and in 1579, M. Salmart, a minister of the church at Castres, put together the disjointed fragments and gave it the shape which it finally took.

It was approved by the national synod of the Reformed Church of France held at Vitré in 1583.

The original Separatists, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, may well be represented by Penry, one of the most heroic spirits enrolled in the annals of martyrdom. In his final appeal to the Queen, he summarizes his creed:—

“All men, by nature, I believe to be the children of wrath, and saved only by grace,—the sufferings and righteousness of Christ Jesus apprehended by true faith. True faith, I believe to be the persuasions of the heart, whereby the soul is truly assured of remission of sins and imputation of righteousness through Christ.”

The tenets of the Baptists, who were put to death in vast numbers throughout the Low Countries in the middle of the sixteenth century, concerning the way of acceptance with God through the merit and mediation of the Redeemer, differ in no respect from the evangelical faith of those who joined in their persecution. The bulky Dutch volumes which contain the records of the cruel martyrdom of these patient and exemplary people, display, in other respects, in their portraiture, the well-known features of our common Christianity. Take, as an instance of the whole series, the following extract from a letter written by Jerome Segerson to one of his companions in suffering in 1551:—

“The grace and peace of God the Father, and the great compassion and love of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who in mercy was sent by the Father for the salvation of

all who are dead to sin, and thus are risen with Christ to newness of life, and the eternal, inscrutable joy, comfort, and communion of the Holy Ghost, strengthen your heart, understanding, and mind in Christ Jesus. To Him be glory for ever and ever! Amen."*

The undaunted spirit of the martyr is indicated by the stanza at the head of his first letter, written during his imprisonment, to his wife:—

“In lonesome cell, guarded and strong, I lie
Bound by Christ’s love, His truth to testify;
Though wall be thick, the door no hand uncloses,
God is my strength, my solace, and repose.”

Take, as another instance, the letters of Jelis Matthüs from prison, in the twenty-third month of his imprisonment, to his wife, containing such passages as the following:—

“Concerning your daily infirmities and mistakes before God, these will not condemn or exclude you; the holy Apostle John provides for these. He says, ‘If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father,’ who intercedes for us, Christ Jesus, who is the High Priest there entered, namely, into the holy of holies, and has offered an everlasting sacrifice, and made reconciliation for His people, and is set down at the right hand of God His Father, as an Advocate and Intercessor for our daily stumblings and errors. To the Intercessor and Advocate I direct you; not to departed saints, as the blind leaders of this world do. Have recourse to Him in your greatest straits, think that His ear

* Segerson was horribly racked, and afterwards, with his wife, a Christian woman of superior attainments, barbarously put to death. —“Dutch Martyrology,” vol. i. p. 373.

is not heavy that He will not hear you, and that His hand is not shortened that He is not able to help you. His eyes are upon the righteous, whom He hath so dearly purchased with His own precious blood, and to their cries, sighs, and tears He listens.”*

Jelis Matthüs was put to death at Middleburg in 1564.

In citing these annals of faithful men of humble station, we may characterise them, in the language of Bersier, as—

“The fathers of modern freedom, the obscure men who awoke to consciousness of something within, greater than the might of Cæsar,—something called conscience, over which brute force had no power.”

On the general question nothing can be plainer than the testimony of Hagenbach, in his “History of Doctrines”:—

“As Protestants and Roman Catholics agreed in resting their doctrines concerning theology and Christology on the basis of the œcumenical symbols (the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds), so they established in common the doctrine of Atonement on Anselm’s theory of satisfaction, only with this difference, that (in connection with other principles) the Protestants gave the preference to that aspect of this theory presented by Thomas Aquinas, whilst the Roman Catholics, on the contrary, were favourable, or at least in part, to the theme of Duns Scotus.”†

* “Martyrology,” vol. ii. p. 374.

† Vol. ii. p. 336.

X.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

“What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered,
Was all for sinners’ gain :
Mine, mine, was the transgression,
But Thine the deadly pain.
Lo ! here I fall, my Saviour :
’Tis I deserve Thy place ;
Look on me with Thy favour,
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace.”

Paul Gerhardt, 1656.

CHAPTER X.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

THE noble foundation laid by Huss in Bohemia was eminently successful. But, unhappily, the profession of evangelical dogma became allied to political Protestantism, and suffered eclipse when the latter was extinguished at the battle of Weisenberg, on the 8th of March 1620. The nationality and religion of Bohemia were totally suppressed. The emperor's triumph was consolidated by persecution, on the one hand, and by the efforts of the Jesuits on the other. The Slovenick language was superseded by the German. Dr. Milman says:—

“Bohemia, as a province of the Christian world in insurrection against the unity of the Church, was even more beyond the pale of mercy than a heathen land.”*

The lonely believer could only hold his tenets in secrecy. Yet there were many who sympathized with the individual feeling expressed by Johann Heertmann, in 1630:—

“Say, wherefore thus by woes wast Thou surrounded?
Ah, Lord ! for my transgression Thou wast wounded ;
God took the guilt from me, who should have paid it ;
On Thee He laid it.”

* Vol. vi. p. 232.

Recent events have restored religious freedom and a measure of nationality to these countries; and one unexpected result has been that the Gospel messenger, in penetrating the outlying districts with the Word of God, has come on proofs of the continuance of evangelical light during all the dark ages, and of the existence of individuals and small communities, holding fast the profession of evangelical doctrine under the ban of the law. The following extracts are from the Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1870-71, concerning colportage in Southern Austria :—

“Our valued colporteur, Rauch, has met with much encouragement in the course of the year. He is one of the Lord’s veterans in Austria, and frequently utters his adoring amazement at the improvements he is permitted to witness, and at the discoveries of God’s faithfulness he is privileged to make in his rounds. In one place he met with a small company of believers, who, hidden to the eyes of the multitude, and deprived of the ordinary means of grace, have for years upheld a clear testimony of Christ’s finished work in the midst of much surrounding darkness. With the help of some precious books, they and their fathers had retained the Gospel in their neighbourhood, from generation to generation. Rauch says that a holy shudder seized him when these books, some of them 200 years old, handed down from generation to generation, and, in God’s providence, the means of salvation unto many, were placed in his hands. These had happily escaped the enemy’s cruel persecution.”

Another colporteur

“Descends from a Protestant family in Upper Styria,

that has weathered all the storms of persecution which have been so frequent in Austria. He loves to tell the tale how his grandfather used to screen his Bible from the eyes of the Romanists. They lived in a simple farmhouse, in front of which, next to the entrance, and immediately adjoining the wall, there stood the customary stone bench, resting on posts made out of tree stumps. The lower part of one of these stumps was carefully hollowed out, and formed the depository for the precious book. To obtain access to the treasure, a couple of stones were removed out of the brick wall, from the inside of the house, and carefully replaced again. Then the dread myrmidons would come to ransack the house in search of the proscribed book, and, after all their labour lost, they would sit down to rest from their pursuit on the very bench under which the culprit lay concealed. Up to this day it is a thing of not quite rare occurrence, when old houses are taken down in those parts, to find, bricked up within the walls, some old Bible, and other precious Christian books."

In England, the strength of the early Quakers in their preaching and proselyting, consisted mainly in this—that, underlying their fanaticism, there was a submission and resort to God's way of salvation. The common desire for the disclosure of this, the recognition of it when disclosed by seekers after religious peace, explains much of the success which accompanies their efforts. The superadded doctrine of inward light would have speedily ceased to operate, but for the life-giving truth of the Gospel by which it was so often accompanied. The experience of John Burnyeat, of Cowswater, in Cumberland, one of the converts of George Fox,

in 1631, will serve as one instance of a truth which might be largely illustrated from similar annals. In narrating his conversion to Quakerism, he says: "Then I saw that I had need of a Saviour to save from sin, as well as the blood of a sacrificed Christ to blot out sin, and faith in His name for the remission of sins." *

Mrs. Elizabeth Harman, the wife of a city merchant, dying at twenty-eight years of age, of consumption, says, after a season of discouragement and weakness:—

"Now is my soul redeemed to God, and He that redeemed me is near to me. The sufferings and death of Christ, His agonies, the shedding of His blood, and what He hath done for me,—I feel now that I have the benefit of all. Blessed be my Redeemer, who is near to me!" †

One more instance. Mary Watson, in 1694,‡—

"Several weeks before her decease, saying that the work of Redemption was wrought and completed, and all doubts and fears were removed, and now she waited to be dissolved and to be with Christ that redeemed and sanctified her."

Reverting again to names of power and place, we find, in 1612, the judicious Hooker thus expressing himself:—

"Faith is the only hand which putteth on Christ unto

* Tomkins, "Piety Promoted," vol. i. p. 94.

† *Ib.*, vol. ii. p. 19.

‡ *Ib.*, vol. ii. p. 64.

justification, and Christ the only garment which, being so put on, covereth the shame of our defiled nature, hideth the imperfection of our works, preserveth us blameless in the sight of God, before whom otherwise the weakness of our faith were cause sufficient to make us culpable—yea, to shut us from the kingdom of heaven, where nothing that is not absolute can enter.”*

This does not differ from the Puritan doctrine on the same vital subject.

Owen, in 1647, in his “Death of Death in the Death of Christ,” thus writes:—

“It was the purpose of God that His Son should offer a sacrifice of infinite worth and dignity, sufficient of itself for the redeeming of all and every man, if it had pleased the Lord to employ it for that purpose; yea, and of other worlds also, if the Lord should freely make them and would redeem them. This is in its own true internal perfection and sufficiency.”

Owen’s most explicit testimony is given in one of the productions of his old age—“The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, through the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, explained, confirmed, and vindicated.” This was published in 1677. Mr. Orme, Owen’s biographer, thus characterises it:—

“In proportion as this doctrine is known and believed, will the religion of an individual be comfortable to himself, and acceptable to God; and from the degree of clearness

* Works, vol. iii. p. 474.

and decision with which it is preached, we may infer the degree in which true religion flourishes in any community. Owen had studied the subject long and profoundly. The doctrine was dear to his own heart, as he derived from it all his comfort as a sinner ; and it constituted the favourite theme of his public labours. He had examined many controversial books on the subject, and attended to the numerous scholastic and metaphysical arguments by which it had been either attacked or defended. From these he had derived little satisfaction. He considered it a doctrine not at all suited to a speculative state of mind. . . . But where any persons are made sensible of their apostacy from God, of the evil of their natures and lives, with the dreadful consequences that attend thereon in the wrath of God, and eternal punishment due to sin, they cannot judge themselves more concerned in anything than in the knowledge of the Divine way of deliverance from this condition."

For the sake of such persons, he investigates the Divine Revelation on this subject, and endeavours to ascertain "how the conscience of a distressed sinner may obtain assured peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." To such, and to such alone, will this doctrine appear to be of importance. When engaged in the serious inquiry "What must I do to be saved?" everything relating to the nature, certainty, and way of deliverance will be considered of unspeakable moment.

"In prosecuting his investigation, the Doctor does not allow himself to wander through the mazes and contradictions of human opinion ; he keeps constantly in view the character of God, as a Judge and a Lawgiver, the actual

condition of man as a sinner, and the glorious provision made by the plan of mercy for securing the honour and harmony of the Divine perfections, and extending salvation to guilty, helpless rebels. He examines the nature and use of faith, the import of the terms justification, imputed righteousness, and imputation of sin to Christ. He points out the difference between personal and imputed righteousness; illustrates a number of passages of Scripture in which the subject is treated, and refutes the objections against his views. He maintains the consistency of the doctrine with living soberly, righteously, and godly in the world; and shows that between Paul and James there is a perfect agreement, as they are treating of the subject under different aspects."*

"Owen proves successfully that the object of that faith by which we are justified is not Divine truth in general, to which an assent is given; and that it is not the belief that *our sins in particular* are pardoned, which is no part of the testimony of God, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as the ordinance of God in His work of mediation for the salvation of lost sinners, and as unto that end proposed in the promise (testimony) of the Gospel. . . It is just believing on God's authority that Christ is the all-sufficient and appointed Saviour of sinners."†

A still fuller account of Puritan theology may be quoted from the learned Henry Ainsworth's "Orthodox Foundation of Religion":—

"Now followeth the third, which is our justification, being the absolution of sinful man from punishment, because of the satisfaction of Christ the Redeemer, appre-

* Orme's "Life of Dr. Owen," pp. 401, 402. † *Ib.*, p. 406.

hended by faith. This word justification is here used for absolution judicial, when God, the Judge, absolveth the fault of the man that is accused before Him, and pronounceth him just and innocent; and it is opposed to condemnation, as Rom. viii. 33, 34. We may not, with the Papists, understand here justification to be the infusion of justice. This judicial act is, in this life, exercised in a man's conscience, wherein God hath His tribunal; 'men's thoughts accusing or excusing'; after this life it shall be exercised by the sentence of Christ. As sin is a difference from God's law, so justice is a congruence with the law both of our nature and actions; and as there is a legal justice inherent in man, by fulfilling the law, and an evangelical justice, by God imputed to him that believeth the Evangel, so is there also a legal justification, and an evangelical. Legal justification is from works done; according to God's law, we stand in the trial of the justice of God. Evangelical justification is when, God's law being violated, we are absolved from the sin and punishment by the grace of God and mercy of His Son, apprehended by faith. 'And by Him all that believe are justified in all things, in which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.' Before the Fall, legal justice had place, and shall have again in the life to come; but since the Fall, in this life the evangelical justice is to be sought for. The reason hereof is, that justification by the law must be upon the full, perfect, and continual keeping of the same; which is impossible by man's weakness. The law of God being violated by sin, His justice must be satisfied first, before any legal justice can be established in us; which being satisfied by Christ, and so we absolved from our sins past, the legal justice beginneth in us again in this life, but shall not be perfected till the next life."*

* Hanbury's "Historical Memorials," vol. i. pp. 427-3.

The Assembly's Catechism does not differ in this respect from the articles of the Council of Trent :—

COUNCIL OF TRENT.

“Christ, who, whilst we were enemies, for the love alone which He had for us, by His suffering on the cross, procured meritoriously our justification, and made satisfaction to the Father for us.”

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

“The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself, which He through the Eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of His Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him.” West. Conf., chap. viii. sect. v.

The Conference of Savoy. Chap. ix.—“Of Justification” :—

“I. Those whom God effectually calleth, He also freely justifieth ; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous ; not for anything wrought in them or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone ; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them as their righteousness, but by imputing Christ's active obedience unto the whole Law, and passive obedience in His death, for their whole and sole righteousness ; they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness, by faith ; which faith they have not of themselves,—it is the gift of God.

“II. Faith thus receiving and resting on Christ and His

righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification ; yet it is not alone in the person justified, but it is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.

“ III. Christ, by His obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are justified ; and did by the sacrifice of Himself in the blood of the cross,—undergoing, in their stead, the penalty due unto them,—making a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God’s justice in their behalf : yet inasmuch as He was given by the Father for them, and His obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead—and both, freely, not for anything in them—their justification is only of free grace, that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.”*

That which is required by man in all the ages, and apprehended by all who have ever found comfort and peace in the Gospel, is expressed by John Bunyan, in 1635, in his sermon on “ The Pharisee and the Publican,”—viz., first, that Christ, by God’s appointment, died for us ; secondly, that by His death He reconciled us to God ; thirdly, that even then, when the very act of reconciliation is performing, and when performed, we are still sinners :—the steps of the apostle’s argument in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

If we turn from the utterances of the Bedfordshire peasant, to those of the gentle, refined, fastidious soul of his (to him) unknown contemporary, Jacqueline Pascal, we find at opposite poles of society the same pivot-truths :—

* Hanbury, vol. iii. p. 537.

“Jesus Christ died on account of His love to His Father everlasting, because by His death He might repair by an infinite sacrifice the wrong which had been done towards Him. He who died on account of His love towards us, because through His love He has paid our debts.”

This sentiment was also at the base of that gracious Christianity which was held by Pascal, the Arnaulds, and by so many less illustrious persons who for three generations, amidst much mistaken asceticism, kept alive the pure flame of evangelical piety at Port Royal.*

The following probably expresses the common conviction of Christian thought and feeling:—

“Christ’s satisfaction is of infinite value and price, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of all the world. But the declaration of the Gospel is that whosoever believeth in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have eternal life. Which declaration ought promiscuously and indiscriminately to be announced to all men to whom God, of His good pleasure, sends the Gospel; and is to be received by faith and repentance. But that many who are invited by the Gospel do neither repent nor believe, but perish in infidelity, arises from no defect or insufficiency in the oblation of Christ on the cross, but is entirely their own fault.”†

The Christian student “will not fail, if working on sound principles, to see more and more clearly,

* Victor Cousin says:—“Evidemment l’esprit de Jacqueline Pasca’ est de l’ordre le plus élevé, et l’âme qui dirigeait cet esprit est de la famille des grandes âmes.”

† Statement of Calvinists, “Acts of Synod of Dordt.”

the longer he studies, that the innumerable variety of contradictory opinions only tends to bring out into more luminous distinctness the glorious outline of the one system of truth on which Christianity rests."* However widely the great Confessions, the Lutheran and the Roman, differ, however distinct their banners, however diverse the armies assembled under them, yet in the deep things of the soul's salvation they are absolutely one.

In the attempts made by the learned to systematise on the one side or the other, we have continually before us the spectacle of great minds labouring with difficulties, and not getting through. All hold that the sacrifice of Christ was perfectly commensurate with the sins of the world, and had before God a sufficient value, as declared by God Himself. The Romanist adds that it had more than a commensurate value, and that the excess is committed to the Church to bestow. The Arminians say that, though accepted by God as satisfactory, yet it attains this quality not intrinsically, but by the Divine compassion. Now all these include the idea of a sufficient satisfaction and atonement; and in all ages believers who have diverged to the one side or the other, have yet relied upon the main truth that Christ by His substitutionary death has provided an atonement for all who come unto God by Him.

"The result of return to God under the influence

* W. B. Pope, "Introduction to Winer," p. 37.

Of the Holy Ghost is justification. This is admitted by all Confessions.* But they differ in definition of the term, and in the time of its inscriptions. They also differ as to the manner of its appropriation—whether by faith alone, or by faith and penance and good works. So also of regeneration: “All Christians agree that the regeneration of man wherein he is restored to righteousness in Christ, and acceptableness to God, takes place under the influence of Divine grace and of the Holy Spirit.”† They differ as to the depravity of the natural man, and its relation to human ability. So “all the standards agree that justification comes to man through Christ; but the manner of the appropriation is variously stated.”‡ Surely what is here asserted to be common to all Christian doctrines, is worthy of being noted and illustrated, and this without the necessity for running after diversities.

If we have proved that the doctrine of a vicarious sacrifice was well known and acted upon from the first—nay, that it was the very life-blood of the faith of the primitive believers, though more fully formulated and more prominently held up and even more elaborately developed in the twelfth century—then the modern notion that we are indebted for it to the latter is a mere pretence. Theologians are charged with finding it in Anselm, and then trying to find it in the Scriptures. But we have seen how entirely this view vanishes upon any actual recourse

* See Winer.

† *Ib.*, 145.‡ *Ib.*, 183.

to the Scriptures and the scattered remains of the first decade of the Christian centuries.

Nothing could be hotter than the pamphleteering and preaching zeal, during the first triumph of the Commonwealth, of Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Independent, against each other; but there was absolutely no doctrinal difference whatever between the combatants. All read the Scripture alike concerning the way of salvation, though they differed, even to mutual passion, in regard to the ordinances of religion. The vast majority of godly men were for the enforcement of one government; but, says the Scottish Commissioner Baillie, "The great shot of Cromwell and Vane is to have a liberty for all religions, without any exceptions."

Men are simpler in their prayers than in their treatises. The free worship of the apostolic age became, in the days of their successors, formulated into an order of service. In course of time the order was prescribed by ecclesiastical authority for use, and denominated the Liturgy. Mr. Palmer observes that the primitive liturgies may all be reduced to four: first, the Oriental, used from the Euphrates to the Hellespont, and throughout Greece; second, the Alexandrian, used in Egypt and along the southern shore of the Mediterranean; third, the Roman, prevailing in Italy and Roman Africa; and fourth, the Gallican, used in Gaul and Spain. All these breathed the same sentiment respecting Christ as the way of access to God, and the satisfaction for man's sin. The additions which

men made in the course of subsequent time, and the different versions and variations patronized by different nationalities, still bore, under all their stalagmitic incrustations, traces of the identity of the rock around which the accretions were built up. If we remove the layer of Romish prayers to human intercessors, there remains still the genuine cry to the Saviour, incorporated in all the public worship of the whole Church in all ages. Prayer has ever been addressed to God the Father on the ground of the priestly office and sacrifice of God the Son. In the English Prayer Book the collects are principally derived from very early sources, the litany is a mere reduction of the Roman one, the miscellaneous prayers and thanksgivings are of Puritan composition, the ejaculations are mostly from the Hebrew psalms; and yet, in regard to the subject of our present inquiry, there is an absolute consistency—nay, identity—of sentiment throughout the whole. Take, as an instance, the collect in Easter-week: “Almighty God, who through Thy only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened up to us the way of everlasting life.” In this, the worshipper of to-day uses the thoughts and words used by Gelasius, who died 496, adopted by Ambrose at Milan, appointed by Gregory the Great, authorized by the Roman missal, and employed, unaltered, as the Christian’s ground of access to God, by untold multitudes, for upwards of a thousand years.

The form of private prayer recommended for use

by the Anglican divines, and added to the early editions of the Book of Common Prayer, expresses the common thought of the Church in all ages. It reads thus:—

“Therefore we beseech Thee, sweet Father, to turn Thy loving countenance towards us, and impute not unto us our manifold sins and offences, whereby we most justly deserve Thy wrath and sharp punishment; but rather receive us to Thy mercy, for Jesus Christ’s sake, accepting His death and passion as a just recompense for all our offences, in whom only Thou art pleased, and through whom Thou canst not be offended with us.”

Collateral to the progress of the kingdom of Christ, there has been a complete succession of shows, each proclaimed as with trumpet and drum, each the admiration of thousands, each enlisting some true hearts and inaugurating some important reforms, but all substituting man’s inventions for God’s provisions. Such were the monastic life, the Anchorites, the Benedictines, the Franciscans; then, the orders of preachers, the Friars and the Jesuits. The Greek revivalists, the reactionaries—Arnold, Abelard, Erasmus;—the poets, headed by Dante;—the artists by Michael Angelo;—the politicians, led on by Rienzi or by Algernon Sidney,—high and noble men, all of them, with high and noble missions;—but religion turns away from them all, uttering the disappointed query—

“Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas’d;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;

Raze out the written troubles of the brain ;
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff,
Which weighs upon the heart ? ”

and finds in the simplicity and power of the Gospel, and in that alone, the medicine which she seeks.

We must enlarge on a forgotten phase of a great reputation. The literary glory of John Bunyan has eclipsed his theological merit. He is, however, unquestionably the first, and still the most considerable, exponent of the principles which are to guide the Church of the future in regard to the mutual relations of its different sections. In the full maturity of his powers, as pastor of a church of Baptists, he espoused the practice of admitting to the church and its communion all persons who gave evidence of regeneration. This provoked attack by Baptists, who held men not to be obedient Christians unless baptized by immersion on a profession of faith. To this attack Bunyan replied in three treatises, which, for closeness of argument and breadth of love, have never been surpassed, and deserve to be better known than they are.* The principle they lay down is, that union among Christians is not to be sought in conventional forms, but in substance and life. He introduces, as it were, the natural as opposed to the artificial classification, and judges a man a Christian by reason of an assemblage

* “A Confession of my Faith, and a Reason of my Practice,” published 1672 ; “Differences in Water Baptism no Bar to Communion,” published 1673 ; “Peaceable Principles and True,” published 1674.

of common properties or characters, rather than by any artificial sign. Hence, though Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of our Lord's appointment, yet, being declared by Him not to be of the substance, but rather the expressions of salvation, he discards them as distinguishing marks of the true species of a Christian, and finds the latter in the qualities of saintship evinced in the life. This principle is important. It is daily coming more and more into adoption, and appears destined to form the universal basis of Christian action. It is not a *via media*, a compromise, but a reasonable deduction from the New Testament, as Bunyan proves. His loving, loyal mind shrank from unchristianizing any one on account of his own fidelity to conscience. He says that he will not so follow Christ, "as if the discharge of our consciences did in any way disoblige or alienate our affections or conversations from any others that fear the Lord."

The present and future importance of the widest applications of the principle, as proving the inefficacy of all ritualism as a basis of Christian interaction, will justify a few extracts from the works referred to. The question is the qualifications which should be required of members proposed for admission into a society of Christians. He says:—

"I desire you, first, to take notice that, touching shadowish, or figurative, ordinances, I believe that Christ hath ordained but two in His Church—viz., water baptism and the Supper of the Lord; both which are of excellent

use to the Church in this world, they being to us representations of the death and resurrection of Christ ; and are, as God shall make them, helps to our faith therein. But I count them not fundamentals of our Christianity, nor grounds or rule to communion with saints. Servants they are, and our mystical ministers, to teach and instruct us in the most weighty matters of the kingdom of God. I therefore here declare my reverent esteem of them ; yet dare not remove them, as some do, from the place and end where by God they are set and appointed ; nor ascribe unto them more than they were ordered to have in their first and primitive institution. It is possible to commit idolatry even with God's own appointments.”*

And again :—

“Mark ; *not as they practise things that are circumstantial*, but as their faith is commended by a word of faith, and their conversation by a moral precept.

“I will say, therefore, that by the word of faith, moral duties gospellized, we ought to judge of the fitness of members, by which we ought also to receive them into fellowship.

“Vain man ! think not that by the straitness of thine order, in outward and bodily conformity to outward and shadowish circumstances, that thy peace is maintained with God ; for peace in God is by faith in the blood of *His* cross, who hath borne the reproaches of you both. Wherefore he that hath communion with God for Christ's sake, is as good, and as worthy of communion of saints, as thyself.

“Some of the things of God that are excellent have not been approved by some of the saints. What then ? Must they be cast out of the Church ? No ; ‘The reproaches by which the wisdom of heaven is reproached, have fallen

* Bunyan's Works, vol. ii. p. 624.

upon Me,' saith Christ. But to return : *God hath received* him, Christ hath received him; therefore do you receive him. There is more solidity in this argument than if all the churches of God had received him.

"Brethren, CLOSE! CLOSE! be one, as the Father in Christ is one.

"This is the way to convince the world that you are Christ's, and the subjects of one Lord. . . . This is the way to increase love; that grace so much desired by some, and so little enjoyed by others. . . . This is the way to hasten the work of Christ's kingdom in the world, and to forward His coming to the eternal judgment."*

He ends with a beautiful quasi-prophetic reference to the government of our Lord: "If others will not do it, the great Shepherd will come ere long, and look up what hath been driven away."† In a similar strain he closes the last sermon preached by him. It was delivered two days before he was attacked with the illness which ten days afterwards issued in his death,—an illness brought on by exposure during a journey, undertaken to reconcile an offended father to his son. He says:—

"Dost thou see a soul that hath the image of God in him? Love him, love him; say, 'This man and I must go to heaven some day'; serve one another; do good for one another; and if any wrong you, pray to God to right you, and love the brotherhood."

We have been the more careful to adduce these sayings of Bunyan, as he is a decisive instance of

* "Reason of my Practice."

† "Differences," etc.

the validity of our argument. He was a Christian of pronounced views, and whose strong affections were equalled by strong convictions.

By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Lutheranism of Germany had become, not a life, but a dogma. Vital religion had well-nigh disappeared. In some lonely places, by some few faithful souls, it was still maintained in its primitive power. This was the case with the Pastor Joachim Stoll, who in the Alsatian castle of Ribeauville taught evangelical doctrine, distributed Bibles at a low price among the people, and lived the life of a scholar, a faithful, energetic minister. Among the young men submitted to his influence was Philip James Spener, born in 1635, who under Stoll's tuition became a faithful and intelligent witness for the truth, and set himself down to the task of his life—the counteraction of the formalism of the period by the dissemination of the doctrines of grace. During a long life at Strasburg, Frankfort, Dresden, and Berlin, he became the expounder of the true bases of a Christian life, and the leader of evangelistic movements. The appellation of “Mystic” was given to his doctrines, and that of “Pietists” to his followers; but he was merely and simply a teacher of the doctrine of Christ, after the manner of his master, and took the Saviour's discourse to Nicodemus as the exponent of the great want of the age. Spener was instructed in his youth by the writings of Baxter, and in his turn he influenced his godson Count Zinzendorf, and,

through one of his school, Christian Davids, so useful to John Wesley. Thus is the spiritual chain continued, though only occasionally visible. The religious awakening which prevailed in Germany in the latter half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, connected with Spener, was characterised by the manifestation of hearty and personal belief in the atoning work of Christ.

Spener recalled attention from human systems of divinity to the simple exegesis of the Word of God. Every student has, in his turn, indulged in the wish and the dream of arranging the Word of God in a scientific method. Experience, however, convinces us that this is an operation to be effected only by every reader for himself. The great magazine of Divine truth must be left in all its original magnificence and multifariousness. Over its portal stands the motto, "*Search the Scriptures.*"

XI.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

“But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away ;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.”

(Dr. Isaac Watts, died 1743.)

CHAPTER XI.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

IF Christians are ever to become imbued with the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, it will be from a conviction of the fruitlessness and sinfulness of religious party strife. The picture gallery of ecclesiastical history is at present hung, not, as it should be, with the portraits of serene saints who fought for the truth, but with those of partisan leaders of rival sects, who were, alas! mutual combatants.

We do not attempt to delineate the varieties of religious thought, or to discuss prevalent creeds. To effect this would require a series of volumes, for these varieties have been the most fertile subject of all thought and literary effort during the Christian ages. The copiousness of such materials is evidenced by every book-catalogue, and by innumerable histories of the Church.* This fact is inexplicable on the theory of infallibility, since a great bulk of these varying manifestations of opinion took place under the direct authority of the Roman pontiff.

* Mr. Hunt has dealt with the modern English portion of this subject in a manner hitherto unattempted. The variety and extent of the ground traversed by him renders his book a lively record of the agitations of men's minds on the great subject.

To what principle, then, do such variations point as determining the basis of Christian theology? Not to change by development, nor to abandonment of the grounds of revelation, but simply to necessary progression, in the demonstration of the suitableness of the Gospel to the progressive needs of mankind.

The advance of natural science is slowly but surely diminishing the divisions between scientific men, as they are led to frame hypotheses which embrace a greater number of common facts. The progress of Christianity will have a similar effect in lessening divisions; but the rate is slower, for the problem is complicated by the strength of feeling, and by the obstructions of worldly interest. Yet we already see that persons divided in judgment as to the modes of religious service, may be absolutely at one in its essentials. From the nature of the case, it is the division and not the union which takes form before the popular mind; and thus has arisen an unmerited scandal.

As a matter of convenience, we characterise certain opinions as Pauline, Augustinian, Anselmic, Calvinistic, and so on; implying a descent of ideas through man. But it is not descent by transmission. The great men who have given name to theological epochs, have each for himself, by deliberate examination of the Scripture, discovered his own theory; and if it happen to coincide with that of a predecessor, it is not thereby proved to have descended from or through the latter. The

coin may have a common stamp, but each owner has derived it fresh from the Divine mint.

By thus claiming for the later times of Christianity a substantial identity in Christian doctrine with the earlier, and by insisting on the unchangeableness and sufficiency of revelation, we do not intend to deny that truth is capable of development and progress, or to ignore the superior knowledge and higher attainments of these later ages. Christianity has a capacity for application and enlargement, as a science, quite equal to that possessed by any other branch of knowledge. Like all other subjects of human thought, it becomes wider and stronger by the results of study and experience. Its truth and value become daily more obvious, as it is seen to realize the true ends of religion. Well does the late Dr. Carson observe,—

“All Christians are taught the truth that saves the soul; but, in entire consistency with this, they may be ignorant of anything else. Accordingly, errors are observed among Christians, and there is every variety of difference among them that is consistent with knowing the way of salvation. Even in the very nature of the Gospel all Christians are far from being equally taught by the Spirit. There are some who hold it with a great mixture of human wisdom, yet so as to be made spiritually alive by it; and in a measure to obey Christ. From this there is every degree in the scale of advancement—till the justice of God, as unfolded in Christ, is relied on with as great confidence as His mercy.”

We delight to reflect that—

“Multitudes are silently and unobtrusively learning the great lesson of life, and it is only some death-bed scene, or some unexpected hour of trial, which occasionally affords us a glimpse of the result; so that it may be hoped the number of those who, in every place, call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, is much greater than superficial or censorious observers can imagine.” *

There is an unmistakably joyous air about the sayings and doings of the revivalists of the eighteenth century. Whether we open an Arminian or a Calvinistic authority,—Wesley or Romaine, Law, Berridge, or Hill,—we read at once the proclamation of Christ as all in all; the glory of His person and work, the Divine efficacy of His blood, the fulness of His salvation, the readiness of the Holy Spirit to convert and sanctify through the truth. These considerations form the staple of the teaching alike in Old and New England, amidst the primeval forests of the Far West, or on the uplands of Scotland.

The strong emotional convictions which accompanied the development of evangelical truth in Scotland, have ever been the characteristic of religion in that country, and are so still. Truth has something to struggle with and to grip in the texture of a Scot; and from the days of Knox downwards, the professors of evangelical truth have been marked by the dedication of their whole souls and faculties in the experience and promotion of religion.

* Monsell, “Religion of Redemption.”

The personal faith exemplified in the character of the Scottish believers, as they emerged from the persecutions of the prelatical party into the peaceful times of the eighteenth century, is exhibited in the life of Thomas Halyburton, who died in the year 1712, whilst professor of theology in the college of St. Andrews. Writing of his experience when about twenty-four years of age, he says:—

“That which yielded me this relief was a discovery of the Lord, as manifested in the Word. He said to me, ‘Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thy help.’ Now the Lord discovered in the manner afterwards to be mentioned, several things, which I shall here take notice of. 1. He let me see that ‘there are forgivenesses with Him’—that with Him ‘there is mercy and plenteous redemption.’ He brought me from Sinai and its thunderings, to Mount Zion, ‘and to the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, ‘that cleanseth from all sin, and speaks better things than the blood of Abel.’ He revealed Christ in His glory. I now with wonder ‘beheld His glory, as the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.’ And I was hereon made to say: ‘Thou art fairer than the sons of men.’ Hereon He let me see that He who had before rejected all that I could offer, was well pleased in the Beloved. ‘Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened; burnt-offerings and sin-offerings hast Thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God.’ Hereby I was further fully satisfied that not only was there forgiveness of sins and justification by free grace, ‘through the redemption

that is in Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God'; but, moreover, I saw with wonder and delight, in some measure, how God, by this means, might be just in justifying even the ungodly who believe in Jesus. How was I ravished with delight when made to see that the God in whom, a little before, I thought there was no hope for me, or any sinner in my case, if there were any such, notwithstanding His spotless purity, His deep hatred of sin, His inflexible justice and righteousness, and His untainted faithfulness, pledged in the threatening of the law, might not only pardon, but, without prejudice to His justice or other attributes, be just in justifying even the ungodly! The reconciliation of those seemingly inconsistent attributes with one another, and with the salvation of sinners, quite surprised and astonished me. The Lord further opened the Gospel call to me, and let me see that to me, even to me, was the 'word of this salvation sent.' All this was offered to me, and I was invited secretly to come and 'take the water of life freely'; and to come in my distress unto this blessed rest: 'Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and ye shall find rest for your souls.' He, to my great satisfaction, gave me a pleasant discovery of His design in the whole: that it was 'that no flesh might glory in his sight, but that he who glories should have occasion only to glory in the Lord; that He might manifest the riches of His grace, and be exalted in showing mercy; and that we in the end might be saved, to the praise of the glory of His grace, who made us accepted in the Beloved.' The Lord revealed to my soul that full and suitable provision made in this way against the power of sin; that as there is righteousness in Him, so there is strength, even everlasting strength, in the Lord Jehovah, to secure against all enemies; and

that in Him there is sweet provision made against the guilt of sins, that through the power of temptation His people may be inveigled into: 'These things write I unto you, that ye sin not; but if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' When this strange discovery was made of a relief, wherein full provision was made for all the concerns of God's glory, and my salvation, in subordination thereto, my soul was by a glorious and sweet power carried out to rest in it, as worthy of God, and every way suitable and satisfying in my case. 'They that know His name, will put their trust in Him.' All these discoveries were conveyed to me only by the Word. It was not, indeed, by one particular testimony or promise of the Word, but by the concurring light of a great many of the promises and testimonies of the Word seasonably sent home, and most plainly expressing the truths above mentioned."*

Gerard Terstegen, the celebrated hymn-writer, who died in 1779, was wont to utter in prose that which he so fully expressed in his poetry—the infinite value of the Divine Saviour. "The atonement of Jesus, the words of Jesus, the spirit of Jesus, the example of Jesus," were the four things he kept constantly before his own mind, and which he endeavoured to impress upon others.

A more northern bard † expresses similar views, about the same time:—

* Halyburton's "Memoirs," pp. 99, 100, 101, 102.

† William McComb, born 1793.

“Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me ;
Died that I might live on high,
Lived that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His and He is mine.”

The evidence of hymnology in favour of the mutual concordance of Christians amidst their apparent diversities, is complete. Every collection of sacred poetry, for use either in public or private worship, will contain doctrinal hymns of all ages. At the present day, every Christian uses, in “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,” the expressions and thoughts of all preceding centuries.

The glowing soul of Hervey breaks forth into rapture ever and again, as the root-idea of the Gospel passes before his mind. His writings are fully charged with praise to God for His grace in redemption. Take, as an instance, the following passage :—

“The righteousness of Christ is the master-pillar on which our eternal welfare rests. Nay, it is the only support which preserves us from sinking into endless perdition :—

“‘There hangs all human hope: that nail supports
Our falling universe.’

He renders intercession prevalent. He is an Advocate, a successful Advocate with the Father. Why? Because He is Jesus Christ the righteous. From hence results His ability to justify. ‘He shall justify many,’ saith the Lord Jehovah. On what consideration? Because He is ‘my righteous servant’; this, and no other, is the meritorious

cause of our salvation. 'Judah shall be saved,' shall escape damnation, and inherit glory. On what account? On account of the righteous branch raised up unto David. Since, then, our acceptance, justification, and salvation—since our comfort in time, and our happiness to eternity, all depend upon the righteousness of Christ, how should we delight in contemplating its faultless, its matchless, its transcendent excellency! Grand! All-sufficient! In every respect perfect! Nothing equal to it on earth, in heaven, throughout the universe! Surpassing the enormity of our guilt; surpassing the reach of our imagination; surpassing all that we can express or conceive; being truly, properly, absolutely Divine."*

The most complete and compact vindication of Christian theology published at the close of this century, was Leslie's "Short and Easy Method with the Deists." This may be taken as a fair representation of the sentiments of the Christian world. It says, concerning the satisfaction made by Christ:—

"This is the foundation of Christian religion,—that when man sinned, and was utterly unable to make satisfaction for his sin, God sent his own Son, to take upon Him our flesh, and in the same nature that offended, to make full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, by His perfect obedience, and the sacrifice of Himself upon the cross."

The features of the revived personal religion which, in the last half of the eighteenth century, sprang up in England, may be seen reflected in the correspondence of Christian friends rejoicing

* "Theron and Aspasio," vol. ii. pp. 207, 208.

in community of feeling as believers, as well as in the more formal treatises and sermons of the age. In 1766 we find Miss Hill of Hawkstone, sister of Sir Richard Hill, and of the late Rev. Rowland Hill, founder of Surrey Chapel, writing to Lady Glenorchy. The latter had, whilst in the enjoyment of youth, beauty, rank, and wealth, felt the necessity of an interest in the work of Christ, and had learnt, through Miss Hill, the way to obtain it:—

“We cannot be too deeply impressed with the sight of our own vileness by nature and practice, and what guilty, perverse, perishing creatures we are ; but should we therefore sit down in despair? No! God forbid ; rather let us say, with the apostle, ‘Where sin hath abounded, there does grace much more abound.’ God is glorified more in showing mercy to our souls, than He would be in punishing us as our iniquity deserves. The everlasting covenant is well ordered in all things and sure ; our debt was paid when Jesus bled upon the cross, our foes vanquished, and grace purchased. What, then, is now wanting? Nothing ; all things are ready for our final and eternal salvation.”*

And in other letters in the same exalted strain:—

“O my friend, what is there that we need more that Jesus has not done for us? Let us take a nearer view of that amazing transaction, of that wonder of redeeming love and grace ; let us, with the eye of faith, ascend Mount Calvary, and there behold our tender, bleeding, dying Saviour extended on the cross ; who was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God

* “Life of Lady Glenorchy,” by Dr. Jones, pp. 500-501.

in Him. See here the incarnate God despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; betrayed by His own familiar friend, forsaken by His disciples; the multitude of the people crying out, 'Away with Him! away with Him! crucify Him! crucify Him!' . . . Then in the spirit of a victorious Conqueror, He bowed His bleeding head. 'It is finished,' He cried, and gave up the ghost. Finished! and for whom? For sinners, for the ungodly—for us, my dear sister, to the end that we might be saved. 'It is finished!' Salvation is completely finished! Blessed words! Do they not pour balm into your heart, and bind it up, and fill your soul with songs of thanksgiving? O what music in the ears of poor convinced and condemned sinners! 'It is finished,' and it is free, free for the chief of sinners, free for you and for me; only believe—'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.' O for the faith of Jacob to wrestle with our Lord! for arms of faith that grasp and will not let Him go without the blessing! A ransom price is found, and accepted and paid; and pardon and peace and life, and even death with Jesus, are all ours; only believe. Let us then be ever drawing from this wonderful, inexhaustible Fountain of living waters, fresh supplies. Jesus bids us come and take of the water of life freely, without money and without price; let not our hands of faith be ever weary or unemployed in drawing; but depend upon it, the more we use them the stronger they will grow. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so may our thirsty souls pant after Jesus, the Fountain of living water! Amen. In Jesus is my merit, in Jesus is my worthiness. Lord, I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only."*

At this time there was a spirit of deep attention to religion spreading over the land. It had com-

* "Life of Lady Glenorchy," by Dr. Jones, pp. 516-17.

menced in the English settlements in North America, it had touched the Red Indian, it had been felt by the Lowland Scot, it had extended over England from the seats of learning to the outskirts of its civilization. It will not be denied that the doctrine of the atoning work and substitutionary death of our Lord Jesus Christ, was the agency of power in this, as in former revivals of religion. The reappearance of a few well-known facts of religious consciousness enables us correctly to infer the presence of a whole set of corresponding convictions. We soon learn to detect the action of evangelical subjectiveness.

We may venture to affirm that there has, from time to time, been just as much of real religion in the world, as there has been of attention to the great saving truth of the Gospel. Men have been moved by truth just in proportion as they have studied it with their desires exercised as well as their intellect. Certain deep needs of our nature are to be found everywhere, in every stage and form of society, and certain deep instincts as to the way in which these needs can be supplied. We maintain that these instincts have acted uniformly in favour of the acceptance of God's way of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Although we hold that the Scriptures form the

* "For although they that are dead some ages before we were born, have a reverence due to them, yet more is due to truth, that shall never die ; and God is not wanting to our industry any more than to theirs ; but blesses every age with the understanding of His truths."—*Jeremy Taylor*.

sole basis of faith and doctrine, yet in their study a valuable guide is afforded by a knowledge of the sense in which they have been received in all ages. If, amongst intelligent, devout, and earnest students, there has been, in the main, an agreement concerning the meaning of Scripture, we may surely, bearing in mind the promises of Divine aid, regard such a conclusion *primâ facie* as a result of the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the revealed truth.

The human mind requires above all things *rest* in religion. It must have something objective. It needs Christ, seen by faith. We have shown that this is, and has been, its actual rest.

If it be contended that our argument is worthless, because the unity of which we speak has not predominated, we reply that there is time enough yet,—the world is still young. This may be one of wisdom's blessed results in the future. Already there have been some fruits, some imperfect recognitions, leading us to the hope that, in the time to come, wide and lasting terms of peace in the master-truth may be established among Christians.

XII.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

“ I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God ;
He bears them all, and frees us
From the accursed load.

I bring my guilt to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White in His blood most precious,
Till not a stain remains.”

(Horatius Bonar, D.D.)

CHAPTER XII.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

WE have seen how the stream of evangelical doctrine holds its way amidst the turbulent controversies which have made up the external history of the Christian Church. In the first ages it was found running through the protracted strife waged concerning the Person of our Lord; it was next detected in the professions of both sides in the great Pelagian controversy concerning the freedom of the will, the condition of man; it next proceeds through the din of wordy warfare respecting the nature of the Atonement; it gave life to religious currents at the Reformation epoch; it is diffused more widely, and not less deeply, than ever, in the present age of dispute touching the extent and authority of revelation.

The doctrinal centre of Christian life, the Atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ, never disappeared from the Church, even during the darkest ages. It is now brought into greater prominence than ever before, and is destined to assume still greater proportions in all Christian systems. It is the core, in the development of which is the mani-

fested life. Its counterfeits are numerous, by reason of its radical unacceptableness to men whilst they remain unconvinced of personal sin and demerit. We have not dealt with the errors, but we set forth the existence of a true and valid bond of union between all believers who accept God's provision of mercy in Jesus Christ. We say there is a substantial, real, and important agreement between all these, in the weightiest of all matters, the chief ingredient of religious peace. All those who rest in the great Atonement are one, however they may differ in other respects. The union is often hidden, and unacknowledged from generation to generation; but it is not the less an historical fact. The enforcement of one formula of belief is pronounced to be impossible by the very records which also prove how entirely at one in fundamentals were the persecutors and the persecuted, the orthodox and the heretic. The enforcement, either of one external fold on earth, or one creed, on those who in other matters differ on grounds justifiable to themselves, are equally vain attempts.

By the aid of the historical stepping-stones that we have endeavoured to point out, we are enabled to mass together the various divisions of the great army of Christian workers, though divided in appearance by apparently impassable bounds. None can lay exclusive claim to the only banner of Christendom; none can claim exclusive right to the watchword, "Lo, I am with you always." Well does Dr. Schaff say:—

“The Saviour moves along with the fulness of His grace, through the centuries of Christianity, revealing Himself in the most Divine personalities, and making them organs of His spirit, His truth, and His peace. The apostles and martyrs, the apologists and church fathers, the schoolmen and mystics, the reformers and all those countless witnesses whose names are indelibly traced on the pages of church history, form one choir sending up an eternal anthem of praise to the Redeemer, and most emphatically declaring that the Gospel is no fable, no fancy, but power and life, peace and joy; in short, all that men can wish of good or glory.”*

It may be reasonably hoped that in proportion as the object of Christianity is realized, and its one grand specific more fully acknowledged, less importance will be attributed to those disturbing details which constitute the visible differences between Christian communities, and between individual Christians. We have adduced testimony of concord in doctrine, not in order to offer it as proof of entire unity—(in the face of history such a contention would be vain and preposterous)—but we do submit it as evidence of the existence of elemental and fundamental unity. Union in Christ, is the union of those who are related to each other in a common confession of a common need, a common acceptance of a crucified Redeemer “once offered for all,” a common enjoyment of peace with God through Him, a common love of gratitude, a common sentiment of obedi-

* Schaff, “History of the Apostolic Church,” p. 56.

ence. We present the words and the actions of those who have been thus characterized, and we say that they were one, and that their faith was a unity, whether they acknowledged it to be so or not.

We do not wish to underrate the value, or to deny the necessity, of a correct theory of the Atonement; belief, on such a subject, must influence practice. The matter is of such transcendent importance as to deserve the exercise of man's highest powers and fullest consideration. But we desire to call attention to the fact that the place which Christ's work holds in the Christian system, and in the records of individual experience, is substantially the same in every age and manifestation of Christianity. We claim the benefit of this as bearing upon the argument for its truth and acceptance: "For this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."*

Amongst all the statements of the Atonement which we have adduced or referred to, we do not single out any one as either completely exhaustive, or in any way as authoritative. There is no authority save the Word of God; and it was well said by the late Principal Cunningham:—

"It holds true universally, that God has never given to any man, or body of men, to rise altogether above the influence of the circumstances in which they were placed, in the formation and expression of their opinions upon religious subjects."†

* 1 Tim. i. 15.

† "Theology of the Reformers," p. 7.

It is a great fact that the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed have never been attacked. All through the ages and controversies they have remained substantially unquestioned.

"But the three great communities (Lutheran, Calvinistic, and Arminian), forming together the Protestant Christian world of the Reformation age, held firmly to these creeds, and to the fundamentals of the doctrine concerning the Person and mediation of Christ, the reality and perfection of His atonement for human sin, the work of the cross, the constitution of the Catholic Church, the office of the ministry, and the means of grace, of which those creeds were the foundation."*

If the alleged growing distaste for dogma, as formulated in a creed, is well founded in justifiable distrust of the latter, history shows that creeds have in fact been of far less importance than has been commonly supposed. They have been fought for, but not obeyed; and often practically adopted whilst formally repudiated.

We have seen that, in the very first ages of Christianity, Jesus Christ was to the disciples All in All, as a manifestation of God in the flesh. This was then emphatically regarded as the great mystery of godliness. Subsequently, in the Augustinian age, He was the All in All as the great Redeemer of His people; to St. Bernard, as the Incarnation of distinguishing love; to the Mystics, as the Consecrated One; to the Reformers, as the Divine and only Sacrifice for sin; to the Puritans, as the one King in Zion;

* W. B. Pope, "Introduction to Winer," p. 19.

to the Antinomians, as the one Master-Builder; to the Calvinists, as the Divine Shepherd folding His own sheep; to the Arminians, as the glorious God of love; to the Broad-Churchman, as the great Rectifier of all things; to the Evangelicals, as the Almighty Saviour. Underlying all these is the assumption, common to all, that Christ accomplished on earth, on behalf of man, a work perfectly Divine and unique, on the ground of which, we, by believing, are reconciled to God. In all these forms and expressions of faith, He, in His work, is fundamentally All in All. The variations in Protestantism, or the differences in so-called Catholic doctrines, do not constitute any argument against the truth of Christianity, for the substance of the Gospel is independent of them all. In that which distinguishes Christianity from all other religions, we urge that, under all its forms, the existence of unity is proved. If the differences among Christians respecting the subject-matter of Christianity ought not to be disregarded in any account of Christianity as a science, so neither ought their agreement. We find a common relation belonging to a large group of facts, and we claim for that relation a place in any scientific estimate. We do not expect to find this brought into prominence by writers of ecclesiastical history, or speakers on ecclesiastical topics; for it is not often the object of the one or the other to minister to that Divine instinct which in all ages has led the humble believer to exalt the

central truths of the Gospel. Inasmuch as, owing to varieties in the mental constitution and condition of men, differences will obtain in the relative proportion in which certain truths or duties will be esteemed, it might have been expected that the whole area of Christian truth and duty, thus necessarily diversified, should be connected by certain common bases of concord; and so we find it.

Christianity has by no means yet had its last word in reference either to internal or external controversies. Questions so momentous deserve a large discussion. Public opinion—and above all, Christian public opinion—is of very slow growth. All matters left by God's government to the decision of men draw very slowly to a sentence. The case must be tried out,—all the witnesses heard. We often anticipate the verdict, but seldom with success. It is only after a full display of errors that truth becomes really triumphant. Some questions, however, are certainly settled; this amongst others: "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," but the name of Jesus Christ.

Although some of the doctrinal controversies of the past do reappear, yet, so rich are the records of the Church, that, for the most part, the student may readily find the successful quietus.

Doubtless there have been many priests and many mothers under Roman Catholic influences, of whom that might have been said which Father Hyacinth

expresses in the dedication of his first volume to the late bishop of Perigueux :—

“Vous me parliez du Verbe par qui le monde a été crée, par qui les sociétés seront restaurées, et vous me disiez qu’en allumant pour l’âme humaine le midi de la foi, il n’entendait pas obscurcir l’aube de la raison ; et vous me disiez son nom, le nom qu’il a pris en se faisant homme, et qu’il gardera dans les siècles des siècles ; et c’était le même nom que ma mère m’avait appris à bénir sur ses genoux,—c’était Jésus Christ !” *

Philosophy proclaims that the religious instinct is a reality, and history discloses that men in seeking for its gratification ask for authority. Scripture alone satisfies this demand. But there is still the choice to be made between rival interpreters. Where shall we find grounds for satisfactory decision as to these? We affirm that, in regard to the substance of revealed religion, there is a true *sensus communis*, a truly catholic doctrine. We have endeavoured to show this in the lives, and from the sayings and doings of living and of dying men. The search for unity is too commonly confined to current popular opinion,—the disordered local beds, as it were, of the upper strata of religion ; if it be prosecuted down amidst its primeval deposits, universality will be found. *Melius est petere fontes quam sectari rivulos.*

The literature and the preaching of modern times furnish, indeed, abundant proof of the substantial unity of Christendom in essential evan-

* “De la Reforme Catholique.”

gelical dogma. If we adduce either special manifestoes, such as the Bampton Lectures, or the Congregational Lectures, or the equally formal enunciations of general assemblies,—*c.g.*, the Wesleyan Conferences, the Baptist Unions, the Church Congress; or the current published sermons of Dr. Vaughan, Mr. Binney, Norman McLeod, Dr. Guthrie, A. Maclaren, Mr. Spurgeon, Dr. Candlish, or Canon Liddon,—we get an absolute unity of thought, and frequently of expression, regarding Christ's Person and work.

The unity is more plainly manifested now than in any former period of church history. As matter of observation, we call attention to this, and adduce it as rendering pointless the common reproach of variations in doctrine between Christians. There is but one vein of golden ore; we extract treasure where our forefathers also worked.

"The greatest masters in this field became more and more convinced that the boundless life of the Church can never be exhausted by any single sect or period, but can be fully expressed only by the collective Christianity of all periods, nations, confessions, and individual believers; that the Lord has never left Himself without a witness, that consequently every period has its excellences, and reflects, in its own way, the image of the Redeemer."*

The politician defines unity as submission to one method of government; the lawyer, as submission to one code of laws; the philosopher, as the ex-

* Schaff, "Apostolic Age," p. 110.

hibition of one set of phenomena; the statician, as the sufficiency of one formula: we affirm unity manifested in the common understanding concerning the necessity and nature of Christ's redeeming work. The final cause proclaimed in the Apocalypse,—the glory of God and of Christ,—is not yet exemplified at all in the outward aspects of the Church, but little in its formal creeds, not much in its fellowships, but it is ever existing in the essential basis of belief. The voice of prayer and the song of praise are everywhere its unconscious witnesses.

We find no change of thought on this vital subject indicated in the works of modern theologians. Robert Hall, in 1822, says:—

“The idea of substitution runs through the whole of this account (Isaiah liii.): ‘He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.’ This is in perfect accordance with the whole stream of information contained in the New Testament, where the death of Christ is seldom mentioned but in close connexion with His being spoken of as a Substitute and Sacrifice for sinners, dying ‘the just for the unjust.’”*

Fifty years afterwards, Dr. Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, says, on a similar occasion:—

“I learn, on the warrant of God's own Word, that Emmanuel has satisfied, in my behalf, the inviolable claims of God's justice; so that whilst the moral government of a righteous Sovereign is vindicated by the Atonement, the

* Hall's Works, vol. i. p. 487.

guilty sinner is placed in a new condition with respect to that holy Judge who scans his most secret faults. ‘By the obedience of One shall many (the multitude of believers) be made righteous.’ Like the guest admitted to the feast because he is clad in the wedding garment provided by the munificence of the king himself, the sinner is accepted before God because his iniquities have been laid upon the Redeemer, and the Saviour’s righteousness by faith becomes his own.”*

On the same subject we quote from the Roman Catholic expositor Moehler:—

“No doubt we see the prayers, the devotions, and above all the faith of Catholics often directed to other persons than Christ; we see their confidence founded upon ordinances and promises which have not been given by Christ; but this veil of Moses drawn over the face of the Catholic brother, ought not to hinder Protestants from acknowledging that, in the Romish Church, which professes the confession of faith in the Trinity, and in the redemption of the world through the blood of the Son of God, the way to righteousness and eternal life is still open, and that the Lord of glory can here too, in individual souls, stamp His image, and glorify Himself in them.”†

Dr. Heppe, in his address to the Christian Conference at Berlin in 1857, says:—

“The life of the Saviour constitutes, in every relation, an organic unity; and everything in Him—His sufferings, and His works, His doctrines, His conduct, His death on the cross—were in a like degree calculated for our redemption. It is the merits of the entire, undivided God-man,

* Sermon on 1 Peter i. 17-20.

† Symbolism, vol. i. p. 259.

the Son of God, whereby we are won again to God. His three offices—the prophetic, the high-priestly, the royal—are alike necessary : take one away, and the remaining immediately appear as unintelligible, as devoid of consistency. Thus, by the advent of the Son of God into the world, there were proffered to men, not by accident, but by *necessity*, at once, the highest degree of religious and ethical knowledge ; the ideal of a life agreeable to God ; forgiveness of sins, and a sanctifying power ; and, as in the one life of the Saviour we find all these united, so they must, in like manner, be adopted by us. It is undeniable, and no arts can long conceal the fact, that Christ proposed, in the most emphatic manner, to His followers, the highest ethical ideal, corresponding to the new theoretical religious knowledge, and further developing the Old Testament precepts. It is likewise equally certain that in His name are announced to *all who believe in Him*, grace and forgiveness of sins—that is to say, pardon for every moral transgression. These are two phenomena, which, as they stand in direct opposition one to the other, require in consequence some third principle which may mediate their union. This third conciliating principle, as it is to unite the two, must be kin alike to law and to grace, to the rigid exaction and to the merciful remission. This is the sanctifying power which emanates from the living union with Christ ; the *gratuitous grace* of holy love, which, in justification, He pours out upon His followers. In this grace all law is abolished, because no outward claim is enforced, and, at the same time, the law is confirmed, because love is the fulfilment of the law ; in love, law and grace are become one. This is the deep sense of the Catholic dogma of justification, according to which justification consists in the reign of love in the soul.”

Turning to another head of testimony, we quote

from the last words of the late Dr. McCall, an eminent Congregationalist minister, the following, in further proof of our proposition :—

“Although Mr. Robertson ceased, in consequence of the joint attendance of others, to have opportunities of easy personal communication, he has preserved a note of what passed in presence of all the three medical gentlemen, at a visit paid by them ten days before the fatal close, which must not be omitted. ‘Tuesday morning, July 17th.—Found the Doctor had passed a dreadful night from embarrassed breathing and entire sleeplessness. When we entered his room he sat raised up in bed, and wore a look of the greatest conceivable exhaustion. After we had stood for a few moments around the bed, he addressed us separately, beginning with Dr. Robertson, and taking the hand of each in turn as he spoke. After thanking them, he continued: “But, gentlemen, it all avails not. I may be wrong; but I cannot but feel—I judge by my feelings—that I am sinking into the arms of death.” Here he made a considerable pause, owing to breathlessness. He resumed: “Gentlemen, I am no fanatic; rather I have—rather I have been too much of a speculatist; and I wish to say this—which I hope you will all forgive me for uttering in your presence—I am a great sinner, I have been a great sinner; but my trust is in Jesus Christ and what He has done and suffered for sinners. Upon this, as the foundation of my hope, I can confidently rely, now that I am sinking into eternity.” And again he apologised for the great liberty he feared he had taken in talking to us in such a strain. Seeing him so greatly exhausted, we left the apartment.’”*

Our law gives peculiar force to such testimony,

* “Life, etc., of Rev. Dr. McCall,” pp. 174, 175.

given under apprehension of immediate death. We adduce a few further proofs of this kind. In 1752 the illustrious Bengel gave his seal, whilst dying, to the doctrine he had laboured hard to promote by his learning whilst living :—

“The ground I feel under me is this : that by the power of the Holy Ghost I confide in Jesus as an everlasting High Priest, in whom I have all and abound.” *

In 1860, Baron Bunsen, in similar circumstances, said : “I see Christ, and I see, through Christ, God.”

In 1863, Archbishop Whately, shortly before his death, replied to a friend who spoke to him of the unimpaired vigour of his intellect : “Talk to me no more of intellect ; there is nothing for me now but Christ.” The shadow which eternity projects on the believer’s spirit brings into prominence the ground-lines of common faith in the Redeemer.

The volumes of sermons by ministers of the Free Church of Scotland, published soon after the great disruption of 1843, as a testimony of faith, display no variation either from the theology of the residuary church, or from that of the common ancestor of both. In one of these sermons, on “Christ the Propitiation for the Sins of the Whole World,” we read :—

“The Son of God appeared in our nature, and obeyed and suffered as a public person. He obeyed and suffered

* Burke’s “Life of Bengel.”

as the propitiation for sins. In infinite love the Father gave Him, and He gave Himself to be the propitiation for sins; and sin having been laid on Him—sins having been laid on Him—the sins of all who were regarded as in Him—the sins of all whom He was regarded as representing—He fully bore them, and took them away, so that now in him God is not only reconcilable, but reconciled, not only a God of love, but a God of peace. He is a God of peace in Christ; and hence Christ is spoken of in Scripture not merely as the propitiatory Sacrifice, by the shedding of whose blood atonement was made, but as the propitiatory or mercy-seat, whence Jehovah manifests Himself as reconciled.”*

So the confident tone of modern German evangelicalism is identical with that which expressed the joy of the Reformers. Dr. Krummacher, the late well-known Court chaplain, does but echo it, when he thus speaks of Mary's greeting to the risen Saviour:—

“For He is alive again who died on the cross, and in His appearance Mary sees—and we do so likewise—the end of all the cares, pains, and troubles of this mortal life. For as His whole doctrine, and especially His testimony to the superhuman dignity of His own person, now shine for the first time in the full splendour of Divine confirmation, so likewise it is only now for the first time actually placed beyond all doubt, that He has finished His work of salvation to the highest satisfaction of His Heavenly Father; that the latter has accepted, as fully justificatory, the ransom paid for us who through faith become one with Him, the second Adam; that righteous-

* “Free Church Pulpit,” Sermon 44, by Rev. W. R. Taylor, Thurso, vol. i. pp. 538-9.

ness has been wrought out; that heaven has been taken possession of for us; and that the world, death, the devil, and hell have been finally and ever vanquished."*

Evangelical theology in the United States of America, though it derived its first impress from the strongly-marked doctrine of its Puritan planters, yet soon became freely discussed, in a practical manner, as an applied science. It had to dwell in an atmosphere of freedom unknown to the ancient world. Without local history, without ancestral obligations, without any kind of bondage to the past, with independent thought and action, the intellect of the new world began its course under circumstances favourable to the fullest diversity. The Bible was the only tie recognised as binding to received opinions. But it was enough. The result was a concurrent and faithful attachment to the common basis of Evangelical Christianity. The New England churches, which were Puritan in their doctrine from their first planting, adopted in 1648 the Westminster Catechism. The synod which pronounced this, affirmed it to be "holy, orthodox, and judicious in matters of faith: and we do therefore freely and fully consent thereunto for the substance thereof"; but they excepted from this approval the regulations respecting church government and discipline.

All the various forms of Christian profession have found ardent advocates in America: it has

* Krummacher, "The Risen Redeemer," p. 51.

become a land of flourishing sects, beyond all precedent. But this phenomenon, though it looks large in the eyes of the world, is absolutely as nothing, compared with the vast power of a common Christianity which prevails throughout the States. Whether we turn to the profound sentences of President Edwards, the polished diction of Dwight, the incisive utterances of Finney, the thrilling words of modern preachers, or the weekly religious publications with which the American press abounds,—we listen to the same saving truth, “Who His own self bare our sins.”

So far as we may judge from religious biographies, the idea of atonement by substitution enters into the course of thought accompanying every conversion. A remarkable soldier, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, Colonel Gardiner, relates that his determination to religion was occasioned by a powerful impression of Christ crucified, and of a remonstrance addressed to himself: “Oh, sinner, did I suffer this for thee, and are these thy returns?”* A very different character, Dr. Edward Payson, a century afterwards, records in his journal, Dec. 16th, “Was enabled to realize, for the first time in my life, what Christ suffered, and for what a wretch He suffered.”† Religious biography, in all churches and sects, in all ages and nations, bears similar witness. The narratives of conversion, whether produced under Patristic

* Doddridge’s “Life of Colonel Gardiner,” Section 32.

† “Memoir of Dr. Payson,” p. 96.

preaching, monastic study, mediæval pageant, Reformation light, or modern oratory, absolutely accord in this respect. It is identity displayed in a thousand varieties of character, and amidst the most dissimilar surrounding circumstances.*

Religious revivals have all been grounded in vivid impressions respecting sin and salvation. The acceptance given at these seasons to the doctrine of Christ's Atonement, is a signal proof that the latter holds the fundamental place assigned to it in these pages. At such times, all ecclesiastical partitions are temporarily ignored,—the work of redemption is exalted above all. Among the proofs of this which occur on every hand, we select the reception given in America to Whitfield, the eloquent champion of this doctrine. Dr. Warren, of Boston, thus relates it :—

“For the first time in their history the British colonies were agitated by one thought, swayed by one mind, moved by one impulse. Again and again through all these colonies, from New Hampshire to Georgia, this most famous evangelist of history moved in triumph. Puritan New Englanders forgot that he was a gowned priest of the very church from whose oppressions they had fled to the wilds of a new world. Dutch New York and German Pennsylvania almost unlearned their degenerating vernaculars as they listened to his celestial eloquence. The Quaker was delighted with his Gospel simplicity, the Covenanter and Huguenot with his ‘doctrines of grace.’

* Amongst other authorities, see *Narratives of Conversions in Commonwealth Days*, by Rogers ; *Narratives of Revivals in New England*, of *Revivals in Scotland*, in *Ulster*, in *Wales* ; again, subsequently, in *Scotland*, and *England*, down to the present year, 1875.

The Episcopalians were his by rightful church fellowship : and thus it came to pass, that when, after crossing the ocean in his flying ministry, he lay down in death at Newbury-port, he was unconsciously, but in reality, the spiritual father of a great spiritual nation." *

The testimony from America may be fitly closed by the sentences of the venerable Dr. Taylor Lewis, in a message sent by him to the New York Conference of 1873. These embody and express the argument attempted in this work:—

"No man can carefully read ecclesiastical history without seeing that there has been all along a most real life, most distinctly separated from the worldly life. There is the line of unearthly characters, the product of an unearthly power—a perpetual miracle, an unbroken series of such unearthly manifestations, extending from the Apostolical through the Patristic, the Roman, the Mediæval, the Protestant, the Modern Church. It is the line in which appear Paul, Cyprian, Augustine, Anselm, Bernard, Luther, Calvin, Pascal, Hooker, Ken, Edwards, Chalmers, down to our own times. It is not a mere fancied *catena*, with links arbitrarily supplied. This stream of life flows on amidst all the apparent confusion of ecclesiastical history. Let infidels say, too, what they will about the endless diversity of creeds; there has been all along this stream of vitality a marvellous unity of belief. 'All these died in faith, holding fast "the doctrines of *grace*."' It is the best name that can be given to that system of truth distinguished from all other by the deep impression it has ever made, and the incalculable importance its recipients ever attached to it—the tenacious truth, ever holding its

* "Evangelical Alliance Conference," p. 248.

own, ever recovering from attack, and from which all divergencies have ever wandered more and more until lost in the utter darkness of atheistic infidelity. . . . This was its essential orthodoxy, as it may be described without any theological technics: a great perdition from which to be rescued, a great and most real peril to man, a great salvation, a great and Divine Saviour. Those who in their hearts hold these ideas as thus generally presented, cannot be said to differ much in any more specific statements of orthodoxy. Grace is the significant word,—grace as distinct from every idea that ever springs from any mere earthly thinking. Man ruined by himself, and saved by God; lost in Adam, found in Christ.”*

We have shown that, independent of all conflicting schools of thought, apart from all religious denominationalism of every kind, above all creeds, formularies, and restraints of words or things, there has ever been a real brotherhood in Christ. The workers in the Church have been members of the same family, though not recognising their relationship. We claim the fact as historical, and we aver that it carries weighty argument; for it proves a real, abiding identity in Christianity. In the future, in all probability, believers of all complexions will aim at a recognition of this unity of faith. They will cease to regard divisions as anomalous, or to allow them to be obstructions to co-operation. This will lead to an evangelical alliance far deeper and wider than any which has yet obtained. In the meantime, it is no slight testimony to the truth and importance

* “Evangelical Alliance Conference,” p. 158.

of these principles, to find that the Evangelical Alliance—a union of Christians as such only—has now, for twenty-eight years, given a modern exemplification of them; and in six general conferences, has shown how the one banner of Christ may be exalted in the midst of dissimilar churches.

God has instituted and maintained an establishment of religion in the world from the first. Its proclamation comes to us in the earliest human records. It has been attested in all ages by believing men. Since the coming of our Lord, its foundations, its laws, and its purposes have been fully manifested. Amidst the endless diversity of human affairs, it has preserved its unique character. It is the one refuge of rest and peace for the soul, that has outridden the storms of time. Once, and for centuries, it had to battle for its very existence; now, it is admitted, though its supremacy is denied. It is bidden to take its place only with other reforming agencies. But it is, and ever will be, paramount. We have displayed its substantial identity and historical unity through all time, and we say alike to the student, the philosopher, and the politician, as the prophet of old, “*What shall we then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall betake themselves unto it.*”

If we receive the testimony of revelation concerning the gratuitous nature of salvation, and if we further accept this “gift of God” for ourselves, we thereby come into unison with the Divine plan

and purpose, and thenceforward live a new life, aptly called life in Christ. The aspect of saving truth varies according to the condition and character of the recipient ; and its expression differs as much as its reception. But as the life is one, so is the truth one. The vast majority of Christians do not analyse their own views ; they know nothing, scientifically, of their own spiritual state ; but they know and feel that they are interested in truths which have God for their Author, and their own personal salvation by Christ as their end. They possess true spiritual life.

We have used the term Christian, in this essay, to express the character of a person possessing an influential belief in the truths which God has declared to be essential to salvation. Such a person is a member of the invisible Church of Christ. We cannot accept, as essentials for the latter, any requirements not found amongst the former. God has revealed certain truths to be necessary bases of belief affirmatively, and has declared the denial of certain other truths to be a decisive test of fatal unbelief. These two divisions are of equal authority, but not of equal importance ; for it is quite possible that a man may hold affirmatively truth enough for his salvation, and yet have no opinion at all respecting the perilous propositions lying outside, or on the converse of this ; that is to say, they may have never presented themselves to his mind. Whosoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved ;

whosoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God is born of God; whosoever believes and confesses that Christ is the Lord, does so by the power of the Holy Spirit,—these are all affirmative saving truths. The holding of either or all of them is inconsistent with the denial of God, the despising of His mercy, the denial of Christ as Divine, or of the efficacy of His Atonement, or of the power of the Holy Spirit. But the extent of the knowledge thus required is nowhere defined. We know that all those who truly call on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved.

We accept Hooker's argument, in his discourse on justification, that God will not condemn a man for errors which may be deduced in argument from tenets held by him, he being a believer in Christ. We have endeavoured to carry it farther, to show that the universality of the latter belief, in spite of variances or even of errors in other respects, entitles us to claim for it all the argumentative force of a catholic truth.

The conflict of ages has raged around now one standard of partisan theology, and now another; but the peace of ages has ever prevailed around the central truth of Christianity,—God's provision for man's guilt. Like the poles of the globe, whilst all else is whirling around, this is absolutely at rest, and is the pivot of Divine spiritual power on earth.

Watson and Hazell, Printers, London and Aylesbury.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

I.

In One Volume, post 8vo., price 7s. cloth,

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ENGLAND.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.—2. THE FIRST PLANTING.—3. THE SECOND PLANTING.—4. THE NORMANS.—5. THE WYCLIFFITES.—6. THE LOLLARDS.—7. THE COURSE OF THE MOVEMENT.—8. REIGNS OF HENRY VII. AND HENRY VIII.—9. EDWARD VI.—10. THE REIGN OF QUEEN MARY.—11. THE ELIZABETHAN AGE.—12. JAMES I.; CHARLES I.—13. THE COMMONWEALTH.—14. THE REIGNS OF CHARLES II., JAMES II., AND WILLIAM III.—15. THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, FIRST PART.—16. THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, SECOND PART.—CONCLUSION.

“This work comprises a rich store of historic information of a very valuable kind.”—*Homilist*.

“Mr. Pattison is the first who has aspired to present to the world a complete narrative of the spread and growth of Christianity in England, from the time of its first planting until the end of the eighteenth century. . . . He has given us a book which will be read with unflagging interest by the members of every denomination.”—*Freeman*.

“The style is chaste. There is, moreover, no redundancy. Every page is crowded with the most important and suggestive facts in ecclesiastical history; and in the statement of these there is a refreshing candour and a high appreciation of spiritual power and excellence wherever it is found.”—*Watchman*.

“A book that calls for very hearty commendation, alike for its contents and for the manner in which it is written. The essence of many volumes of ecclesiastical history will be found comprised within its 368 pages; and a more instructive, as well as thoroughly interesting work, we should have difficulty in naming.”—*Christian World*.

“It is impossible in a brief review like this to give our readers a full idea of the interesting facts selected, of the charming bits of biography set in every page, and of the taste which characterizes the work. There are many wise remarks and gems of thought scattered up and down. It is a book worthy of the widest circulation, and should be in the hands of every family.”—*Baptist Magazine*.

II.

In 8vo., price 1s., sewed wrapper.

NEW FACTS AND OLD RECORDS.

A PLEA FOR GENESIS.

LONDON: HODDER & STOUGHTON, PATERNOSTER ROW.

HODDER & STOUGHTON'S PUBLICATIONS.

MR. BALDWIN BROWN'S NEW BOOK FOR YOUNG MEN.

THE BATTLE AND BURDEN OF LIFE.

By J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A., Author of "The Higher Life,"
"The Soul's Exodus," etc. Fcap. 8vo., 3s. 6d.

THE SUNDAY AFTERNOON. Fifty-two Brief

Sermons. By the same Author. Second Thousand. 7s. 6d.

PROFESSOR REUSS ON THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE. By EDWARD REUSS, Professor
in the Theological Faculty, and in the Protestant Seminary of
Strasburg. 2 vols., 8vo., price 12s. each.

"A great and valuable contribution to the History of Theology."—*British Quarterly Review*.

"The book is full and interesting. The author writes excellently and eloquently. He is clear, discriminating, impartial."—*Athenæum*.

DR. OSWALD DYKES ON THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

FROM JERUSALEM TO ANTIOCH: Sketches

of Primitive Church Life. By the Rev. J. OSWALD DYKES, D.D.,
Author of "The Beatitudes of the Kingdom," etc. Now ready,
crown 8vo., cloth, 7s. 6d.

"Characterized by the results of wide and accurate scholarship, well-sustained eloquence of description, and a vivid presentation of Christian truth. The book is of high value throughout."—*Nonconformist*.

CHRISTIANITY IN GREAT BRITAIN: an

Outline of its Rise, Progress, and Present Condition. Small 8vo.,
cloth, 2s. 6d.

The Paper on the Church of England was sanctioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury; that on the Roman Catholic Church by Archbishop Manning; and that on the Wesleyan body by the President of the Conference. Principal Tulloch, D.D., is the author of the article on the Church of Scotland; while that on the Nonconformists is from the pen of the Rev. R. W. Dale, M.A.

ISRAEL'S IRON AGE; Sketches from the period

of the Judges. By MARCUS DODS, D.D., Editor of St. Augustine's Works, Author of "The Prayer that Teaches to Pray," "The Epistles of our Lord to the Seven Churches of Asia," etc. Second Edition. Crown 8vo., cloth, 5s.

"Dr. Dods writes well, and the reader will be at once pleased and benefited by this excellent book. The subjects of the chapters are Joshua, Gideon, Jotham, Jephthah, Samson, Eli, and the Blessings of the Tribes. The author sketches in a graphic manner the events which come under his notice and the characters he describes, and he brings out forcibly, and with true religious feeling, the lessons suggested by his topics. Such a book is well fitted to give a clear and vivid idea of the period."—*Christian Evidence Journal*.

HODDER & STOUGHTON'S PUBLICATIONS.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL THEOLOGY. By Rev. W. JACKSON, M.A., Bampton Lecturer-Elect. Demy 8vo., 12s.

"This wise and masterly essay. The author is wanting in no one necessary qualification as a scholar, a theologian, and a logician, to make his work of sterling value."—*Standard*.

FORGIVENESS AND LAW: Grounded in Principles interpreted by Human Analogies. By HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D., Author of "Nature and the Supernatural," "The Vicarious Sacrifice," etc. Second Edition. Crown 8vo., 5s.

BIBLICAL EXPOSITIONS; or, Brief Essays on Obscure or Misread Scriptures. By SAMUEL COX, Author of "The Private Letters of St. Paul and St. John," "The Quest of the Chief Good," "A Day with Christ," "The Resurrection," etc. Large crown 8vo., 8s. 6d., cloth.

"The tone of these homilies is wonderfully vigorous, and their standard surprisingly high. So far as we have seen, Mr. Cox never quits a subject without illuminating it."—*Literary Churchman*.

MEN OF FAITH; or, Sketches from the Book of Judges. By the Rev. LUKE H. WISEMAN, M.A., Author of "Christ in the Wilderness." New and cheaper Edition. Crown 8vo., cloth, 3s. 6d.

WORKS BY FRANCIS JACOX, B.A.

"Mr. Jacox is a consummate artist, a mosaic worker, whose skill never fails; out of his rich materials he creates genuine books, absorbing in their interest."—*British Quarterly Review*.

SCRIPTURE PROVERBS: Illustrated, Annotated and Applied. Crown 8vo., 10s. 6d.

SECULAR ANNOTATIONS ON SCRIPTURE TEXTS. First and Second Series. 6s. each.

ASPECTS OF AUTHORSHIP; or, Bookmarks and Bookmakers. Crown 8vo., cloth, 8s. 6d.

AT NIGHTFALL AND MIDNIGHT: Musings After Dark. Crown 8vo., cloth, 8s. 6d.

CUES FROM ALL QUARTERS; or, Literary Musings of a Clerical Recluse. Crown 8vo., cloth, 7s. 6d.

HODDER & STOUGHTON'S PUBLICATIONS.

THE SUPERHUMAN ORIGIN OF THE

BIBLE, inferred from Itself. By HENRY ROGERS, Author of "The Eclipse of Faith," etc. Second Edition, in 8vo., price 12s.

"We gratefully accept this first volume of a new series of 'Congregational Lectures,' satisfied that its popular character will command a wide circle of readers, while the freshness and originality of the treatment of an oft-debated theme, its absolute freedom from all controversial bitterness and dogmatic theorising, will commend it to the respectful attention of men of the most divergent views."—*British Quarterly Review*.

WORKS BY DR. VAN OOSTERZEE.

I.

THE IMAGE OF CHRIST AS PRESENTED

IN SCRIPTURE. An Inquiry concerning the Person and Work of the Redeemer. By Rev. J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, D.D., Professor of Theology in the University of Utrecht, Author of "Christian Dogmatics," "The Theology of the New Testament," etc. Translated by the Rev. MAURICE J. EVANS, B.A. Now ready, 8vo., cloth, 12s.

II.

CHRISTIAN DOGMATICS; a Text-Book for

Academical Instruction and Private Study. Forming the new volume of "The New Theological and Philosophical Library." Royal 8vo., pp. 840, price 21s.

The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol says :—"Oosterzee's large work is of great importance, especially at the present time. Modern difficulties are fully confronted, and the connection and development of Christian doctrine clearly and candidly set forth. The reader will not fail to derive much from the care and clearness with which questions, whether of controversy or speculation, are discussed by this learned and suggestive writer."

III.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTA-

MENT. A Handbook for Bible Students. By the same Author. Second Edition. Crown 8vo., 6s.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE OLD TESTA-

MENT. A Series of Popular Essays. By the Rev. STANLEY LEATHES, M.A., Professor of Hebrew at King's College, London. Crown 8vo., cloth, 4s. Second Edition.

JESUS CHRIST: His Times, Life, and Work.

By E. DE PRESSENSÉ, D.D. Fourth Edition. 9s.

THE HAND-BOOK OF BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.

By the Rev. GEORGE H. WHITNEY, A.M. Containing a Descriptive and Historical Account of every Place, Nation, and Tribe mentioned in the Bible and Apocrypha, Alphabetically Arranged, and Illustrated by nearly One Hundred Engravings, and Forty Maps and Plans. Crown 8vo., 7s. 6d.

THE VILLAGES OF THE BIBLE. Descriptive,

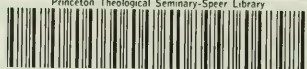
Traditional, and Memorable. By E. PAXTON HOOD, Author of "Dark Sayings on a Harp," "The World of Anecdote," etc. Crown 8vo., price 7s. 6d., cloth.

LONDON: HODDER & STOUGHTON, PATERNOSTER ROW.

125

[illegible]

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01037 4017